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BEHELD ON EARTH,

IN THE

HABIT OF MEN.

WILLIAM LEWELYN,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT LEOMINSTER.

GLOCESTER:

PRINTED BY R. RAIKES.

1795.

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CHRISTIANITY is the only true religion in the world; and every man is true or falle in it, according to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which he holds in his mind. He that believes him to be what he really is, is a real christian: he that believes him to be what he is not, cannot be such. If he has not the doctrine of the person of Christ, the christian religion he cannot have. For christianity without Christ, is impossible in nature; and true christianity from a false Christ is equally so: as impossible, as for real truth to derive itself from a positive lie.

TRUTH is afferting the existence of that which doth exist; and a lie is afferting the existence of that which doth not exist. He therefore, who believes Christ to be what he is, is by his faith justified and approved; but his faith, who believes him to be what he is not, is his condemnation. The faith of the one cannot condemn him; that of the other cannot justify him: not only

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shall not, but cannot in nature. If any man believes you to be what you are not, your reason will, and must, impute his opinion, either to his ignorance, ill nature, or hypocrify. To justify him, therefore, is impossible. But if it is what you know to be true, neither better nor worse than the real fact, you cannot condemn him: your mind is compelled to justify him, like it or dislike it. So the man, whose faith makes Jesus to be, neither better, nor worse, nor otherwise than he really is, cannot be condemned.

A MAN's faith, be it right or wrong, communicates and imparts its own nature and properties to the whole man: what that is, whether true or false, that he is himself in theory and design; in principle and practice; in hopes and views. If in the doctrine of the person of Christ, he is right, he is universally right, though for a while an impersect man; his reason, his mind, his will and aim are right and true: and if in that he is wrong, he is nothing but a composition of mistakes.

Should any one fear, or suspect that I am gone too far, let him remember what is faid, Joh. iii. 16. 18. 36. "God so loved the world, "that he gave his only begotten fon, that who soever believeth in him, should not perish, but "have

" have everlasting life.—He that believeth on him " is not condemned: but he that believeth not. " is condemned already; because he hath not " believed in the name of the only begotten fon " of Gop.—He that believeth on the fon, hath " everlasting life: and he that believeth not the " fon, shall not see life, but the wrath of God " abideth on him." Joh. viii. 24. " If ye believe " not that I am he, ye shall die in your fins." 1. Joh. 5, 12. " He that hath the fon, hath life; " and he that hath not the fon of God, hath " not life." By having the fon is meant having the true doctrinal idea of him as an object of faith. He that hath this, is not condemned, shall not perish, and hath everlasting life: and he that hath not this, hath not life; is condemned already, because he has it not; the wrath of God is upon him, and he shall die in his sins.

THE faith required is this, you must believe that I am he, or die in your sins. That
is, you must believe that I am he, and that I
am what I say that I am: that I am altogether he, and altogether what I say that I am;
and what you say that I am not: this you must
believe, or die in your sins. It follows therefore, that the true faith which constitutes real
christianity, is believing that Christ is what he

B 2

really is; and that believing him to be, what he is not, is antichristianity. This leads us then to this observation, That christianity is the real and positive knowledge of Christ; and it divides itself into two general ideas.

- 1. The knowledge of his person, and
- 2. Of the nature of his undertaking for sinners.

FIRST, the knowledge of the person of CHRIST is effential to christianity. And herein we must know what he is by nature: whether the creator, or a creature; finite or infinite: both he cannot be; nor any thing in the middle, half way to both fides. True, the union of two natures, created and uncreated is, and has been efpouled and afferted by the world, as the true doctrine. But however learned, and numerous its advocates, their own definitions and defences of it are its full confutation. CHRIST must be either the infinite creator, or a finite creature; either the holy Goo, or a mere man, as we are. This is, therefore, a point that ought to be carefully and critically examined and stated, till a person is fully and fairly convinced. But some will tell me, that indeed they cannot pretend to any certainty in such a deep and difficult fubject. How can we, fay they, fince the opinions are fo various and widely different, and each

each professed by men of reputation for learning and religion? Since men of character are in each party and doctrine, who can be fure of his being right? Those who make this honest confession, should certainly be excused, and let alone by every body. For they declare that they have not common sense sufficient to see any difference between wisdom and folly, reason and absurdity, confiftency and inconfiftency. They have therefore, nothing to do with any doctrine, true or false: for by their own confession, they have not good fense enough to be instructed, and consequently, are incapable of falvation. With these then, neither I, nor any body elfe, have any thing to do. They put themselves down as irrecoverable in ignorance and incapacity.

BUT GOD willeth all men to be faved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. He willeth men, and therefore, all men may come to the knowledge of the truth; and if they do not, they cannot be faved. He that knows the true doctrine of Christ, and can discern the difference between that, and the opposite lie, which is framed to counterfeit it, and to defeat its operation, shall be saved according to the will of God. He shall not die in his sins; is not condemned, and hath everlasting life.

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THE

The truth that we are to come to know, in orde to falvation and everlasting life, is, as I said, what relates to Christ: and that is, who, and what, he is. And the truth is, that he is God: God by nature: the very, the infinite God of nature. Here I shall endeavour to prove therefore, the divinity, or divine nature of Christ, against all opposers, who either in part, or in whole ascribe another to him. But by his divine nature, I do not mean a divine person within the man Christ. By the divine nature, or the divinity of Christ, I mean his slesh; his visible body; his whole person. In other words, that the man himself was wholly, corporeally, and identically God. And this I prove,

I. From his fonship. From the quality of the fonship attributed to him, he appears to be the real son of the divine nature, and therefore, nothing less than God by nature. This is asserted in the text just mentioned. Joh. iii. 16, 18. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his "only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in "him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. "He that believeth in him is not condemned; "and he that believeth not, is condemned al"ready, because he hath not believed in the name
"of the only begotten son of God."

In order to afcertain the real fense of the passage, I will call the attention of the reader to three things. First, its relation to the discourse of which it is a part. Secondly, the critical sense of the words in which it is expressed. And, thirdly, the professed design mentioned therein. And every man must own, that whatever sense these three together give their consent unto, must be the real sense of the place.

FIRST, take the passage in its relation to the discourse of which it is a part. Nicodemus, having been an eye witness of the miracles wrought by our LORD, came to him, and faid, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles that thou doeft, except Gop be with him. The question here is, whether Nicodemus said enough or not enough? and confequently, whether he pleased or displeased? and whether he was praised or rebuked? That Nicodemus by his confession displeased is evident; for he is answered roughly. After his feeing the miracles in their quality and numbers, and the ease and openness with which they were wrought; to come and fay we know thee to be a teacher come from God, for that, except God was with thee, thou couldest not do so, was very far short of the conviction and conclusion B 4

clusion to which fuch miracles would naturally lead. His reasoning and inference from such premises were so dull, so flat, and indefinite, that they only betrayed his own incapacity, and withal gave great offence. He therefore, animadverts on some of his words with harshfarcasin and taunt. You say, EXCEPT GOD be with me: and I fay, that EXCEPT a man is born again, and EXCEPT he is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot fee, cannot enter the kingdom of God. He then goes on to detect his ignorance, and to upbraid him with being a master of Israel, and yet incapable of reasoning better than he did; yea, incapable of discerning, or giving affent to the plainest truths, when stated and set before him. He adds, that no man ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the fon of man, which is in heaven. Our Lord does not fay that he had ascended, for the verse stands thus, And no man hath ascended up into heaven, but he, descending from heaven, the son of man, was in heaven. This is a remark on Nicodemus's faying, that he was a teacher come from GoD. As if he would fay, what dost thou mean? is it that I am a native of this earth originally, and ascended into heaven to receive my commission and instructions to act thus? No man ever afcended aultib

descended there for such purposes: but he, who descended thence, the son of man was there always before. I am then a teacher come from Gob—out of HEAVEN.

WHAT now was Nicodemus's fault? Wherein was he to blame, and why was he chid and mortified? Because he did not confess him to be the only begotten fon of God. Our Lord had laid claim to the title and relation, and had acted omnipotence before his eyes, in a manner in which he could not be deceived. Therefore, he ought to have faid, we know that thou art the fon of Gop come down from heaven; for none else could do fuch miracles, and in such a manner. Therefore our LORD afferts that God fo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten fon. The passage then, is a keen and cutting reflection upon the confession of Nicodemus, as a flat and dull inference from the miracles he had feen; as very far below the character and dignity of the Saviour, and far from making him a gift adequate to the love of fuch a being as God, to so enlarged an object as the world. Jesus affirmed that he had come as the gift of the eternal love of God his father to the whole world; and then acted omnipotence before them, as a proof of his being the person he pretended to be. How insipid and despicable

despicable then, must be this confession. We know thee to be a teacher come from Gop, for that nobody could do these things except Gop was with him! He did not work one miracle to prove that he was a teacher come from GoD; but to prove that he was his only begotten fon. The confession of the Pharisee is lukewarm. loathfome, and tantalizing; and not to be heard without anger and confutation. And fo he was treated. Our LORD afferts, that he was not merely a teacher come from God, but his only begotten fon, the gift of his love to the world, and shone in it as such: and withal concludes by telling him what the reason was, that he and others did not fee his character and discern it; that is, because they loved darkness and hated the light, and lived a life that would not bear be feen. And hereupon, the conversation closed, and Nicodemus took himself away, seemingly without uttering one word more than what he faid at first. Police ingeling Vice

Now suppose that our LORD had been no other, nor higher in personal dignity and office, than the unitarian saviour, as Dr. Priestly and others would make him to be; what may we suppose his feelings to be upon hearing Nicodemus? how would he appear on the occasion?

despicable

He would have been overjoyed. He would have faid, at last I am got out of the din of ignorance and idolatry, and have met with a man of fenfe and discernment! Blessed art thou Nicodemus the Pharifee: flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee: it is the dictate of unbiassed and uncorrupted reason. On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell, (if there be fuch a place) shall not prevail against it. Go to the companions who have the same view of me as thou hast. Tell them, how wife and happy it is for them, that they do not think too highly of me. This is my forrow and misfortune, that I am obliged to be among those who have always too much faith in me. This is the great fin of my disciples, and will be of the world, to wit, an extravagant faith in me; confidence in me; dependence on me; high thoughts of me; great expectations from me; fay, and do what I will to prevent it! My care and preaching therefore, will be taken up in warning and exhorting all men, to beware of me; not to truft, not to believe, not to depend on me: not to give too much praise and honour, to which they are ever prone in spite of all means to prevent it. You have taken me right; I am a mere man as you are; a teacher fent of God, and no more; go in peace

peace, and be stedfast in this perfect confession fo free from idolatry. Dr. Priestly afferts that thinking too highly of him, and honouring him too much, was the fin of the disciples which CHRIST faw and endeavoured to suppress, as what would be the great fin and idolatry of the world. The contrary is so evident in the new testament, that I find it impossible to believe that he thought so; and therefore must put it down as a specimen of lawless courage and resolution.

BUT to conclude here, Nicodemus's confession was, as far as it went, perfectly unitarian. But our LORD heard it with resentment, as a degradation not to be endured; and in direct and vehement opposition to it, afferted and protested his real character and dignity to be, that of the only begotten fon of Gop. And he that can fee the vast difference between being called a teacher come from Gop, and being his only begotten fon, will clearly see the reason of our LORD's ftern farcasms, and the awful solemnity of his affirmations. He knew the coming of unitarianism, and that this was the confession of it, though not in full; and therefore must be frowned upon at. its first found and appearance. The Pharisees were indeed all unitarians, and would have received him, if he had been contented with the titles

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titles and honours which that doctrine would have conferred upon him. But refusing all honours and titles but those of the exclusive son of God, he was condemned by these genuine unitarians to die by crucifixion between two thieves, and for no other reason. In a word, Nicodemus's confession put our Lord down merely as a teacher whom God owned; but he in direct opposition affirmed that he was his only son.

LET us view the passage according to the natural and critical force of the words in which it is expressed. But a question may arise in some minds, whether the words are to be taken in their fimple, or figurative fense? qualified, or in their full force? and how are we to be certain, which fense we are to take them in? This is easily fettled, if it be remembered that the passage is controverfial, and the dispute was, who, and what, Jesus was. A teacher come from God, fays Nicodemus, and he would allow him to be no more: I am his only begotten fon, fays CHRIST. To fay this of himself, when really no more was intended than what Nicodemus had confessed, would be flourishing, falle, and extravagant: would be a piece of lofty infignificance, impossible to come from our LORD. As the dispute was about the . truth and reality of his title, person, and character, he was bound in honour, so to say, to speak in words fairly to be understood. We are therefore to take the words in their critical and natural sorce. And therein we have three things afferted, First, that Jesus was God's son. Secondly, that he was begotten. And Thirdly, that he was the only begotten.

I. JESUS CHRIST is the fon of God. A fon, taken in the real and perfect fense of the word, is in possession of the same nature, distinct in person, with the same form, parts, passions, motions, powers, and principles as the father. In all these things, a perfect son is the perfect image and description of his father; and to all beholders and enquirers, delineates him, and thereby proves his very nature and mode of existence. Jesus was fo perfect a fon, the image of his person so express and accurate, as to render any fight of him for ever needless and superfluous. He affirms therefore, He that hath feen me, hath feen my father also; and he that knows me knows him by me his fon. There is therefore, no possibility of knowing or honouring, or admiring, or loving, or hating the fon, without doing the fame to the father. For they are perfectly the fame: whatever any one fees, to be hated in the fon, the fame is exactly in the father

father to awaken his love or hatred, and to engage his like or diflike: there is nothing in the one to be the matter of admiration or diffeuft but what is equally fo in the other. Says our LORD to the unitarians of his own time, when they faid unto him, where is thy father? Joh. viii. 10. "Ye neither know me, nor my "father; if we had known me, ye hould " have known my father alfo." And again to his disciples, Joh, xiv. " If ye had known me, " ve should have known my father also, and " henceforth ye know him, and have feen him" he that hath feen me, hath feen the father. A perfect fon is the perfect image of his father in nature, person, parts, and powers; and lesus is fuch. tures the efferce of his fenthip.

II. He is his begotten fon. That begotten, is fometimes to be taken in a figurative fease, is not to be denied: but that it is not so here, I have already proved. The occasion was too interesting, and the debate too critical to admit of any thing, but the natural and unfigurative sense. Taken so, it afferts that Jesus is the son of the father by generation. This action of the father was real, but surpasses all created intelligence. Says the prophet Isaiah liii. "Who "can declare his generation?" That is to say,

none can, for it is unfathomable. Of the generation indeed of men, bealts, and vegetables, we know little more than that it is to but howe and why we do not: much less of the generation of the fon of Gop. In generation, taken in its stural fense, the father communicates and imparts this own nature and perfonality, with all his mode of existence to the fon. The fon holds his being? nature, and all its forms by derivation from the father. The fon is nothing, and has nothing, but what he has derived from the father; and the father is nothing, and has nothing, that he has not communicated to the fon The whole nature of the father with its forms and powers, are centred in the fon by derivation which conftitutes the effence of his fonship. is fach.

in the simple and natural sense and force of the words, conveys the ideas above; and are essential to father and son, without which the relation cannot exist. Here then we may judge and discern with certainty, wherein the father and son are equal; and wherein they are not equal. The father, having communicated to the son, all that he is, and has, the son possesses the same nature, sorm, and powers as he does. The father is nothing in these things originally, that the son is

not by derivation. A man by generation imparts to his fon, the whole of his nature, with all the principles effential to it: fo Gop the father imparted to his fon his own nature, with all the infinite perfections peculiar to it. The father is not a littler really, unless the whole that is in the father, is by derivation, whole and entire, in the fon. But if the whole that is in the father by origination, is in the fon by derivation, then they are father and fon truly, and truly related. And the fon being thus really in the form of God the father, knows it to be no robbery to think himself equal with him, and to speak and act accordingly. For in nature, form, and attributes they are strictly and necessarily equal, and cannot be father and fon without being fo. On the other hand, as the father gives being to the fon, and the fon receives it from him, the father is greater than the fon. For herein the father is first and the fon last; the father is the original, the fon is the image; the father is the fpring, the fon is the offspring; the father the model, the fon the imitation; the father gives all, but receives nothing. The father therefore is supreme and sovereign, and the fon is subject to the father; the father commands, the fon obeys; the father fignifies his will, and the fon executes it. In these things

things, the father is greater than the son. Equality here, would not only be confusion; but the total annihilation of the relation. The headship and supremacy of the father, and his prerogative in all things to have the lead, is founded in the nature of his relation to the son; and consequently is inseparable from it. God the father is the head of Christ the son; the son therefore cannot be the head of the father. When all things were put in subjection to the son, the father therefore himself is excepted. For the son cannot be above the father.

Thus, with respect to nature, personality, form, and attributes, father and son are necessarily equal. With regard to place and order, they are not equal. In the sense first stated, they cannot but be equal, because they are father and son; for the nature and personality derived, is in all things the same as that from which it is derived. If the father is in one nature, personal form, and attributes, and the son in another, they are neither father nor son to each other. Sameness therefore, and equality here, is essential to the existence of both as such. But as the father gives to the son to be all that he is, in nature, personal form, and attributes, he is prior, and is therefore his head and sovereign. The father, as

I faid, commands, and the fon obeys; he fends, and the fon goes. And here, the father is greater than the fon; and must be, else they can be really neither father nor fon. In nature, and glory, and excellency of being, they are equal; but in place and order, the father is supreme and the son is subordinate.

II. Next we are to confider Christ as God's only begotten fon. I have partly handled this, and the other points under confideration in the book on the Form of God. But I could not there state the doctrine fully, because of the quantity of other matters to be treated. Here therefore, I repeat many things there mentioned, for the sake of enlargements and additions.

God, then, has one fon and no more. He begat one, and rendered another, not only need-less, but impossible. One fon absolutely perfect, will not admit of a second. Jesus is such a son, and therefore the father begat no other. Jesus is worthy of all the love of the father, and of all the homage that the creatures can render for ever. And if he is worthy of, and entitled to, the whole of the paternal love and praise of the father; and to all the honour that the creatures can render, none of it must be alienated from him; and therefore another son must not make

his

his appearance. This one fon is every thing, every idea of a fon in all the perfection of the person and character; every thing that can constitute the reality of the relation, is to be found in him. If therefore, there were millions of fons. they could neither be, nor do, more than this one. Consequently, he is entitled to all the praise and love of God and angels, and men. This bars up the way against another; for this one is every thing; can do every thing; has a right to every thing; and is worthy of the whole, and leaves nothing for another. God, and angels, and faints, are fo much in love with Tesus, that they will not look at another, nor even endure the thought. He is all of a fon, and worth every thing, and leaves no room in the breafts of those who know him for one wish after another. but and tated

The father cannot have an object more perfect in glory and beauty to the eye; his person cannot be represented with more life and accuracy to friends and soes; his mind cannot be more fully declared; his will cannot be more perfectly done, nor could there be more, or better obedience, if there were a million of sons. On the other hand, men and angels could not have more goodwill, love, and friendship; they could not be more fully, more certainly, more perfectly saved; nor

have their business better transacted in heaven and earth, in time or eternity, if there were two. as many thousands. This one is himself. all, and can do all things with all perfection, with all readiness, and at all times, for God and all the creatures. Another, therefore, would be a need-not; yea an impossibility, for God, men, and angels, are engaged to Jesus Christ, to give him all their love, admiration, and praise, to all eternity. O Jesus! thou only begotten! thy father will alienate none of thy praife, nor move thy jealoufy, nor give thy glory to another! All my praise and admiration is also thine; and their forrows shall be multiplied, who hasten after another. They shall figh without sympathy, and their plagues shall not move my pity. I hate thy haters, and thy friends shall be mine.

I HAVE thus briefly confidered the sense of the passage taken according to the nature of the discourse where it stands, and secondly, according to the natural and critical force of the words in which it is expressed. I now proceed

III. To confider it according to the general defign of it: that is, in what fense it will appear, by viewing the impressions intended to be made thereby. And the general design of the passage evidently is, to impress the mind with the love

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of Gop to all men, and the consequence of believing or not believing it, both as to time and eternity.

LET us first consider what impressions are intended to be made. Says our Lord, Gop so loved the world. The word So, is a term of aggravation; intended, either to increase and heighten, or to extenuate and diminish the idea: it means either fo great, or fo little. But here it cannot be intended to diminish the idea, but to heighten it. For we are never called upon to consider how little the love of Gop is, but always how very great. Here the unitarian must confent to my reasoning, willing or not willing. For if we fav we are here invited to fee and confider how little the love of GoD is, it will militate against his own doctrine. Because that will fink the idea of his supreme Gop and father. whose greatness and glory, he thinks, he is taking care of against the incroachments of Jesus CHRIST. On all hands, and by all professions and descriptions of men, it must be confessed that the words used to set forth the love of Gop, are never intended to impress us with the littleness, but with the greatness of it. This every arian and unitarian is bound to consent to.

THE apostle words it thus, Eph. iii. " Rooted " in love, to comprehend the breadth, the length, " the depth and height of the love of CHRIST. "which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled " with all the fulness of God. Now unto him " that is able to do, exceeding abundantly above " all that we ask or think, according to the " power that worketh in us, unto him be glory " in the church by CHRIST JESUS, throughout " all ages, world without end." It is evident that the love of Gop here intended, is the love revealed in and by Jesus Christ; and as evident that the subject occasioned the straining of the language, and forcing it into irregularity; and, (if it were possible) extravagance. This subject where it occurs, generally moves and fwells the language; I was going to fay, disturbs its gramatical course and rules, because of its immenfity.

EVERY thing, therefore, concurs to prove that I am to take the word So here, in its strained sense, with all the force and energy that can be added to it; and this brings me to the point—The love of God to the world, is so liberal, so profuse, so immense, so unspeakable, so insinite, and unbounded, that he gave his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. He spared not, he kept not

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back,

back, but delivered him up! He gave his other felf! his equal in power and glory! a fon infinite in worth and beauty! a fon perfect in love, wifdom, and goodness! the fon of his infinite love and delight! a fon in whom is found all that he values!

Now let us try the words according to the unitarian, whose creed was drawn up by the Pharisees, and sent by Nicodemus.—God so loved the world, so loved all mankind; so great, so wast, so mense, so infinite was his love; yea, so incredien, so unfathomable was his love to men, that he made one of themselves a teacher of the rest! O the breadth and length, the depth and height! Here is a gift! here are immeasurable ideas! Here are incomprehensibles! Here is a stretch of thought! Hear it O worlds! One of the human race is a teacher sent of God! Here language and definitions, and comparisons and imaginations fail!!!

Now in the first state of the case, that Jesus is the only begotten son of God really, the love of God is set forth in all its immeasurable greatness. It is absolutely impossible for it to be set higher: and in the unitarian creed it is made so little, that it is next to impossible to make it less. It is confessed, and must be, on all hands,

then, that the defign of the passage is to affert its greatness; and the character of the great God requires it, even according to unitarians themselves as well as all others. But, according to the unitarian fense of the place, the great and infinite God fo loved the world, that he bid one of its inhabitants to go and teach the rest; and then left him in their hands to be abused, and in three years to put an end to his life by a cruel and shameful death. Tell me, ye unitarians, could love do less than this? If it could, name it. According to you then, the diffage should have been worded to this effect-Goo loved the world so little, that he bid one of the people go and teach the rest, and leaving it between them, it foon ended in the man's death.

But if Jesus is the only begotten son of God; his other self; the brightness of his glory; the express image of his person; in whom he beheld all his own excellencies with infinite joy and delight; giving him, afferts the breadth and length, the depth and height of his love, and proves it to be like himself, incomprehensible, and past finding out. God is love: and this is Godhead in the pre-ordained act of love, coming forth out of himself to the view of all. Infinite love had been brooding, and sitting over its own vast de-

figns, till now they became ripe in the fulness of time. Now God is going to be God before the whole universe. He gives his fon, his only begotten, his equal in power and glory, to make himself God by one act that should never be equalled nor forgotten; and, to give security to his people that they shall never be neglected.

THE apostle therefore, argues from this point, Rom. viii. 32. " He that spared not his own " fon, but delivered him up for us all, how shall " he not with him also freely give us all things?" The apostle's reasoning is, that the giving his son, rendered the giving every thing else free and unavoidable. The argument is founded upon the fon's fuperior worth. If he is worth more than all things, and especially infinitely more, nothing else must, nothing else can be withheld. Because the good thing withheld, would thereby be fet up in value above the fon. The fon would thereby be exposed and dishonoured: he is given to men, and not thought to be too good; but fuch and fuch things are thought too valuable. Therefore the argument runs on straight and avails itself of the impossibility of being otherwise than so. In a word, the argument here is, that the fon was a gift fo superior to every thing else in being, fo stupendous in its own nature, that

the very supposition of a draw back in any thing else was inadmissible, absurd, and impossible. For it would be depreciating, and an infinite reproach to the son of God, the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, equal in power and majesty.

Now, let us consider the consequence of believing, or not believing, this love of God. He that believeth is not condemned, shall not perish, and hath eternal life. He that believeth not is already condemned, shall not see life, and the wrath of God abideth upon him. The object of faith is the only begotten son as a gift sufficient to express all the love that is in the divine nature.

He that believeth in the only begotten son as his Saviour, is not condemned for his conduct; for it is full of wisdom and good sense. As he is the only begotten son of God, he believes that he has power to save, and to forgive him all his sins, for he is almighty. He believes that he has goodness enough to do it; and also that he has sufficient interest in, and authority from God to do so. And who can condemn him for putting so much considence in God's own son? Where is the folly? Where is the rashness? Where is the injustice done? Is it ungodly?

Is it profane? Is it blame worthy? Is it difpleasing to the father or son to be set up so high? Is it grievous to the father to hear, that his perfect fon and image should be thought able and willing to fave those, whose falvation he entrusted in his hands? By no means. Therefore he that believeth in the only begotten fon of Gop is not condemned, but justified and commended. But he that believeth in the unitarian Saviour is condemned, because he trusteth in an arm of flesh. Condemnation here is unavoidable. He, who believes for falvation in one no higher, no better than himself, is a weak and ignorant fool, whose faith will be his shame and But he, who believeth in the only confusion. begotten fon of Gop, equal in power and glory, can never be ashamed of his confidence, and shall never be confounded. No one can fay to him, thou hast acted the fool; thou hast done unjustly in believing that he had either goodness or power fufficient to fave thee from thy fins. To believe that any creature can fave us, is a great fin, and must be condemned. But to believe that God can fave us, cannot be condemned, for it is giving him the honour due to his power and love. If Jesus was a creature, condemnation for believing in him would be certain and unavoidable

in the nature of things: the man that would do fo, could not be vindicated, with regard either to the good fense, wisdom, or justice of his conduct. But he is a person so high in dignity. fo great in goodness, and so mighty in power, that believing in him can never be a matter of shame and condemnation to any one. A person may believe a teacher sent of God, but if he believes in him, he shall, and must be condemned, for his conduct is void of fense, and derogates from the glory of God. But to believe in him who is of God, his fon, his equal, his other felf; holy, harmless, separate from sinners, higher than the heavens and able to fave unto the very uttermost fense of the word, honours Gop, and doth credit to his own understanding; and therefore is not condemned, and never shall. sea lead coo to the real new

In the next place, he shall not perish, but have everlasting life. There is a natural connection between believing and not perishing, but having everlasting life; and the manner of wording the original conveys that idea. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that every one believing in him should not perish, but have eternal life. The object of taith here is the son of God. He has absolute life and immor-

immortality in himself. For says he, As the father has life in himself, so hath he given to the fon to have life in himself. He is therefore a preventive against perdition, and the natural means of life and immortality in the mind where he is believed and contemplated. What we believe, embrace, meditate upon, and contemplate, has a state of residence within us; imparts its own nature and qualities unto us, and becomes one with us, whether it be good or evil; moral or immoral. Believing in the divine nature, makes us therefore partakers of the divine nature, to escape the corruption that is in the world. The object of faith will transform us into its own nature and likeness always in proportion to the degree of vigor and tenacity in which it is held. He therefore, who believes in the only begotten fon of God, shall not perish. but shall partake of him, and with him, in honour, glory, immortality, and eternal life. By faith he hath the fon, and therefore hath life.

FURTHER, He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the only begotten son of God. And, as added below, he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him. He that believeth not is condemned already. This is flung immediately and awfully

at Nicodemus. After what our Lord had faid, and done, before him and others, together with the manner in which it was done, to confess that he was a teacher come from Gop, was fhamefully mincing and fqueamifh. Irrationally cautious and halving. Jesus had afferted that he was the fon of GoD; either he was that character really, or the worst impostor: his miracles had put his pretensions out of doubt. But Nicodemus goes irrationally in the middle, to make him neither an impostor, nor what he himself pretended to be, but fomething of a character between both; and by it he feems to have offended more than down right oppofers. Either he was the best, or worst of characters; Nicodemus interposes with a lukewarm, meal-mouthed, indefinite confession, which made him a middling man, neither one thing nor the other. And therefore, every word in our LORD's discourse is edged with censure and repulse. This clause is severe and awful against him-You say, I am a teacher come from Gon. Unintelligibly referved and cautious! A teacher! A teacher of what?of what fort?-of what degree?-of what title?-Come from Gon! How did I come from him?-. Where was he when I was with him?—He that will not believe more than you do, shall be condemned;

demned; yea, he that does not believe that I am the only begotten fon of God, come to prove his great love to the world, is condemned already. This was Nicodemus's case, whose unitarian faith in Christ brought him to shame.

But from him, I turn to apply the words according to the general defign; and that is, That he who reads the four evangelists, and sees what Jesus faid and did, and the manner in which he conducted himself, and does not presently and immediately believe that he is the only begotten of Gop, is condemned already: is condemned immediately, and the wrath of God abideth upon him. He is condemned as a wicked fool that has too little fenfe, or too little goodness, or both, to be any thing, but an object of hatred and contempt. He is too ignorant to be taught; too dull to be elevated and moved by things truly high; too low and despicable for a state of glory. In a word, if he makes Jesus any thing less than the only begotten fon of God; God in nature, person, and power; he is condemned as a dull and stubborn sinner, incapable of reasoning, and of being moved and entertained by any thing truly great and worthy. And if he does not repent, as Nicodemus did, it is impossible that the wrath of God should ever depart from hith.

He that reads the facred history of our LORD's birth and life, and makes no more of him than Nicodemus did, and the unitarians do, cannot be justified; cannot be vindicated; cannot be rationally looked upon with an eye of pardon or pity. Impute it to ignorance or dishonesty, it matters not which; wrath is equally his due. If he tells me that he endeavours honeftly to find this out and fails, I reckon him too great a fool to be refpected, excused, or pitied. Away with him-if he cannot attain to this, he is good for nothing. Though Nicodemus's error was much more excusable than his successors, and our LORD foreknew that he would foon repent, yet wrath abode upon him; and every fentence, however gracious and benign in itself, yet against him breathed wrath and refentment. The close of the discourse is as awful and fevere as any thing that came out of his mouth. If perfect power, wisdom, goodness, and truth, rendered visible, will not cure a man's ignorance, nor engage him to believe, what will, what can do it? What is he good for? All this is visible in Jesus, and proves him to be the fon of God. And he that does not believe in him as fuch, is under wrath without pity.

To

To close here, the unitarian faith and confession, in its most inadvertant and innocent stage, provoked perfect patience and meekness to unufual anger and refentment: even the mere pronunciation of it. Its praise and homage in its most harmless and excusable day, disturbed the divine mind, and awoke wrath in mildness and gentleness itself. The lamb of God, meek and lowly in heart, who came into the world to render the mildnefs of the divine nature visible, could not, would not hear the found of it without indignation and repulse. And if it was so provoking then, how much more now! Jesus of Nazareth then at his first public appearance afferted a real fonship, and a positive derivation of nature and personality from Gop: in other words, that he was expressly and Aricely his fon.

II. His stile and manner of speaking afterwards, naturally agrees with that affertion, and connects itself with it in the mind. If it could be supposed, that for some cause or other he had swelled his title, and expressed himself, in drawing his own character in the sigurative and exaggerating stile, a teacher of truth would soon extenuate and qualify the phraze, and bring the idea to its proper standard. But it appears to be the very reverse. He calls God his father; and that openly and

and avowedly on all occasions, and in all places. The instances of this are too numerous in the four evangelists to be referred to, and therefore I shall content myself with the citation of a few out of the gospel of John only.

IOHN ii. " Make not my father's house an house " of merchandize." John v. " My father work-" eth hitherto and I work." Joh. vi. " My " father giveth you the true bread from heaven. " For the bread of GoD is he which cometh " down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. " I am that bread of life. I am the living bread " which came down from heaven: if any man' " eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and " the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which " I shall give for the life of the world. I am " the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall " never hunger, and he that believeth on me, " shall never thirst. Verily, verily, I say unto " you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the " flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye " have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and " drinketh my blood hath eternal life. For my " flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink in-" deed. Doth this offend you? What and if " ye shall see the son of man ascend up where D 2

"he was before? Ye neither know me nor my " father; if ye had known me, ye should have "known my father also. I am from above, ve " are from beneath; ye are of this world, I am " not of this world." Joh. x. " My sheep hear " my voice, and I give unto them eternal life, " and they shall never perish, neither shall any " pluck them out of my hand. My father, who " gave them me, is greater than all, and none is " able to pluck them out of my father's hand. I, and my father are one. Many good works " have I shewed you from my father. If I " do not the works of my father, believe me " not." Joh. xiv. " In my father's house are " many mansions. If ye had known me, ye " should have known my father also. And hence-" forth ve know him, and have feen him. He " that hath feen me, hath feen the father. He " that believeth me shall be loved of my father. " My father will love him. My father is greater " than I." Joh. xv. " All things that I have " heard of my father, I have made known unto " you. He that hateth me, hateth my father. "They have both feen and hated, both me, and " my father." Joh. xvi. " The spirit of truth " shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, " and shall show it unto you. All things that the " father

& father hath, are mine: therefore faid I, he shall " take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. I " came forth from the father and am come into "the world; again, I leave the world, and go " to the father." Joh. xvii. " Father the hour " is come, glorify thy fon, that thy fon also may " glorify thee. Now, O father, glorify me with " thine own felf, with the glory which I had " with thee before the world was." These are fome, and but fome of the inflances of this language, wherein it appears that our Lord's converfation, stile, preaching, and disputing, was but the continuation of that first affertion, that he was the only begotten fon of Gop. The reference of this language to the claim above, and its connection therewith, is obvious.

Ar the paffover, related Joh. ii. in which he made his first public appearance, the first thing that he did, was to claim the temple, as his father's house; and with irresistible authority, drove the mercenaries out of the place, together with the cattle and sheep; and, slung the money all about the court. This he did, because the house was his father's house: and as it was his father's house, and the abuses and nusances were insufferable, he entered with a scourge in his hand, and drove them all out, with signs of wrath and

D 3

indignation which they were not able to withfland. His right thus to act, was his fonship:
they desire a sign of it: he answers them sarcastically; but afterward upon the feast-day, wrought
many miracles. Hereupon a great number believe
in his name, and made some offers to embrace
him. Jesus knowing their insincerity, declines
them, and withdraws. Being thus disappointed,
they join in a confession of faith, and privately
send it after him by Nicodemus, To wit, That
they had agreed to believe that he was a teacher
come from God.

NICODEMUS delivers and pronounces it to him. He is received and handled roughly, and after being upbraided, is told that Gop had not fent a teacher, but gave his fon: had fo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten fon. He that believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; he that believed not was condemned already, because he had not believed in the name, not of a teacher come from Gon, but of the only begotten fon of God. This was the beginning of the matter, as a public subject. And ever after, Jesus called Gop his father. And confequently, his subsequent conduct was the continuation of his claim. Every place, every difcourse and message sounded with the words, my father.

father. As I faid above, he had publicly feized the temple, and with a degree of boldness suited to the occasion, accompanied with energy, that no power could refift, he removed the nufances, because it was the house of his father. His right to do this was founded in his fonfhip; without which, the action, being his own, would have been illegal. He does not fay that he was bid to do it, but himself made a scourge with his own hands, and went in, not in any body's name, nor by virtue of orders given him; for he pretends to none; but acted as a fon over his own house. That sonship which fully justified his conduct, he put out of doubt by a feries of public miracles. These were wrought in his own name, which impressed the idea of omnipotence, and rendered a fuspicion of fraud and forgery, irrational. After all this, for the eye witnesses to confess that they believed him to be fomething, and fomebody, fome how from God, was a confession of faith, more provoking, if any thing, than downright contradiction.

THE after-life and conversation of our LORD was therefore full of the sound and sense of the words, My father. He would have been full of it, if that had not been the case: but it is certain that that gave increase to the language; and the D4 end

end was to continue his claim. Suppose now that a man went forth over all the kingdom, charged with a message from the king. In every place, he fays, My father fent me unto you with a message, which comprehends all your interests. Such is his good will to you, that in fending me, he fent his only fon: and my father's orders are fo and fo. It is his will that you should receive the message, and me as his only fon. And I can affure you, that he who will do my father's will, shall find his advantage therein; and that man who will oppose my father's will, shall find the cost in the consequences. In this case, the people would to a man, understand that he wanted them to own him as the king's fon, Whether they believed or disbelieved him, they would never doubt about his meaning; because no man would, or could express himself in this manner, but with a defign to induce them to receive him as the fon of their fovereign. They could take him in no other fense, nor imagine that he meant any thing less.

This was the conduct of Jesus and his stile, with circumstances of design and formality which could not escape notice. The people therefore, must unavoidably take him in that sense, and know that he intended that they should.

He pronounced and preached his fonship, and called God his father to his friends doctrinally and scientifically, as the best of subjects. That the father was now become visible; correctly and accurately feen in his fon, who was his other felf: so perfectly the form of each other, that feeing one was feeing both. That the love of the father, had cleared, and carried itself beyond all doubts, or enquiries, or comparisons; and had fet reason at liberty to glory and triumph in full affurance of faith. That if the father gave his fon, he would give every thing: that the word and promise of Jesus, were those of the father: that conversing with the fon was conversing with the father: that the conduct, mildness, and innocency of the fon, were those of the father: and that living and conversing with him, was a proof that they could do fo with the father. Thus he called God his father, and declared that receiving, loving, knowing, and feeing him, was receiving and loving, knowing and feeing the father. Bleffed, fays he, are your eyes that they fee the things you fee. For every advantage did aocrue from feeing the real fon of God. Thus they had feen the divine nature; thus they knew God; they knew his form, his voice, his mind, his mildness, and grace: it came to fight and was made

made visible; and men became familiar with Godhead, by being intimate with the person of the son. Thus they knew him with whom they had to do, through time and to all eternity. And therefore the Saviour called to mind over and over the relation between him and God, upon all occasions, saying, my father.

HE was careful to form the idea of his fonthip, and draw it upon their minds, that they might know what to receive and what to reject as an object of faith. And it is certain, that his friends understood it in that light. They believed him, though not fo readily as they should: they confessed him; they received him and adored him, as the fon of God and Saviour of the world. They knew that he wanted them to do fo: they faw that he approved of it, and cordially received the homage whenever paid: yea, that hefometimes invited it, and provoked unto it. The apostles rent their clothes when the people adored them; and forbad the deed as immoral; because it was what did not belong to their nature. But he always received it, as a thing he had been used to, and was by nature worthy of. Says he, to the man who had confessed him to be a prophet, Joh. ix. " Dost thou believe in " the son of GoD? Who is he?" says the

man. " Thou hast both seen him, and it is " he that talketh with thee. And the man faid. " LORD, I believe; and worshipped him." And, Matt. xvi. " Whom do ye fay, that I, the fon " of man, am?" Peter replied, " Thou art " CHRIST the fon of the living God. Bleffed " art thou, Simon, &c." Other instances might be referred to, similar in design. Jesus then called Gop his father to impress his friends with the persuasion of his real sonship; they understood him fo; they believed him to be fuch; they confessed it and adored him: and he received their adoration with tokens of approbation and pleasure, as receiving what was his due, which put him in his proper place. He claimed a fonship which made him equal with Gop, and courted divine honours; and he received them, and never intimated, nor gave one fign to show that he thought the homage was accompanied with more than was due to his person. In a word, among his friends he carried himself uniformly as one that had been used to be adored, and knew how to receive it, and make it the advantage of those who rendered it.

AND again, Jesus called God his father among his enemies, controversially. They denied it, and affirmed it to be false, and he afferted it to be true.

And

And two parties were never more strenuous than they were on both fides. Neither could be prevailed upon, to give up, abate, or come to a They would gladly give the place compromise. and title of a messenger come from Gop. The power and quality of his miracles had induced them to acknowledge him as fuch. This confession they accompanied with the title, Rabbi, the most honourable epithet granted by them to any man; and this respectful message was sent to him by a person of respectability and rank. They evidently fent it with a blank to be filled up by himself. They made him a Rabbi unasked: they own him a teacher come from God, and let him fay himself of what rank, and degree of eminence. They fet him at full liberty to put himself in any place of honour as a teacher come from God, even the highest that he could name. They will allow him any place of eminence and rank here, and withal to be enrolled among the Rabbies, as an honorary title. But they were informed by Nicodemus that he was very rough, and almost inaccessible: that he upbraided him, and taxed him with ignorance: and infifted upon nothing less than being the only begotten fon of GoD: that he promises eternal life to those who receive him as fuch, and delivers over to damnation all who do not. Nicodemus repented and recovered himself, though it
does not seem that he ever made any great sigure among the followers of Jesus Christ.
But this begun a quarrel, in its progress and end
the most bitter that ever was, or will be, in the
creation of God. After this, no kind message,
conversation, or good word ever passed between
the parties.

HE afferted and declared before them in the most solemn manner, that he was the son of God, and called him his father, as a cardinal and central truth, that comprehended every other: they on the other hand, were exasperated, and declared it to be a blasphemous, and down right lie. They declared and resolved, if he persisted in this, that it ought, and should cost him his life: he on the other hand, that if they did not believe it, it should cost them the damnation of their fouls. Says he, If ye believe not that I am he, you shall die in your fins. He that believeth not is condemned, because he hath not believed in the name of the only fon of God. did not give up his title, they refolved that they would inflict on him all that damnation that was in their power, which was temporal death: and if they would continue to deny him his title as

real fon of Gop, they should not see life, but abide under his wrath for ever. He afferted my father worketh, and I work. This was the highest stile that could be used: it was classing, and ranking himself with Gop in nature, kindred, and works. They were enraged, and fought to kill him; and would if they could, have killed him without trial, judge, or jury. For they thought the case required none, because he had said, that Gop was his father, making himself equal with Gop. He affirmed in reply, that he did all that the father did; and did it in the same manner as he did; and that all men, without exception, must honour him as they honoured the father, or be rejected by both. He that honoureth not the fon, honoureth not the father. This brought on his death by crucifixion, and abuse unheard of; and also their ruin by being the malicious and inveterate authors.

But they were in a dilemma. The reality and beneficence of his miracles, were evidences in his favour as a good man: the multitude faw them, and affirmed that God was with him: themselves beheld them with amazement, and were compelled to confess a power above nature. The people whispered, and murmured out their objections. If he works miracles, and merciful miracles

miracles, he must be good, and Gop must be with him. What then can you do with him? how can you put him to death? by what law? Here they were at a loss what to do. Their cause was in confusion, and themselves perplexed and diffracted. The man whom they are to indict, and put to death as a malefactor, does good actions not to be paralleled in the annals of time, and acts with power and energy not to be denied. He gives eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, limbs to the maimed, ease from pain, and deliverance from the possession of devils, by speaking a word. But withal, the man is a blafphemer: the very worst of the kind: he savs that he is GoD: the very fon of the very living GoD. He rejects and despiles every other title of honour, or token of respect. Nothing less will serve him. He makes this the whole of his cause: insists upon it openly and peremptorily: afferts unequivocally, that if we do not believe, that he is all that, we have no life in us. Acknowledging him as a good man, a Rabbi, a master of Israel, a teacher come from God, is nothing with him: all this we have offered him; but he rejects it with anger: and infifts upon it that he is the fon of the highest: declares that he is not of this world, but came down from Gop to do the will of his father,

father, and is his only begotten fon; and folemnly declares, if we do not forthwith believe this, and honour him as we honour the father, that we shall be all lost; shall be all damned: yes, and that we are already damned for not believing this, and that the wrath of Gop abideth upon us. This is what we received from him, in anfwer to a respectful message by Nicodemus. No man could be treated with more respect than we treated him by a master of Israel; and we received in return, upbraiding and threatenings; and with all that we can fay or do, his conduct has been all of a piece ever fince. This, or to this effect were their feelings and reasonings.-What in this case would be their conclusion? Why this. Let his miracles be what they will: whatever power or goodness appears, the man is a blasphemer; and the worst ever seen or heard. The whole therefore that he does, must have its origin in the devil: his miracles must be traced to that original, and to no other. After this, their measures were nothing but directly or indirectly preparations for his death, wherein they never rested till it was accomplished. This was the beginning, progress, and connection of their cause, previous to the final condemnation and crucifixion which followed.

THEY had previously agreed to try him for blasphemy, and consequently, the law against this crime they enforce against him by the hands of the Roman governor. When the Roman therefore objected to the profecution, they cried out, we have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the son of Gop. Joh. xix. 7. This was the charge brought against him for which he was tried. A council was called; the high priest was president, and witnesses were suborned to make good the charge. But the false witnesses not having been properly instructed, nor aware of the article of accusation to be proved, did not answer the ends of the court. They wanted witnesses to swear that they heard him fay, that he was the fon of GoD. Those that they had hired, could not be made to understand what fort of evidence was wanting, and were therefore dismissed. Then the president, owing to the necessity of the case, rose, and put our LORD to his oath, as follows.

"I ADJURE thee, by the living GOD, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the fon of the living GoD, the fon of the bleffed? Jesus answered, Thou hast faid. Nevertheless I say unto you, here- after ye shall see the son of man, sitting on E "the

"the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then faid they all, art thou the fon of God then? He replied, I am: ye fay that I am.

THE high priest then observed, that to call in more witnesses was now superfluous; for all that was wanting they had now heard out of his own mouth. The blasphemy was therefore proved, and he must be condemned upon his own evidence, which took place accordingly. They all declared him worthy of death, alone for making himself the son of Gop. No other crime is fought for, nor intimated in the fentence but his confessing and afferting this. Thus our LORD afferted his being the fon of Gop at all times: taught it with care among his friends, and procured their adoration, and accepted of it: argued it against his enemies, though he knew that it would fpoil all his good works in their esteem: would cost him reproach, danger, and death in the end: yet he held it to the last moment.

But suppose it should be granted, or at least suspected, that our Lord has swelled his character, and over-rated his dignity and relation to God, by a figurative strain which was to be interpreted softly, and qualified by other places of scripture. There are other witnesses that formally

mally gave evidence in the same cause. And these are, John the baptist—God the father—His inspired writers afterwards—And lastly, his own works. If he has used the exaggerating and swelling stile in drawing his own character for the joy of friends and terror of enemies; by one, or all of these, we may expect to hear the language moderated, and the ideas of him reduced to their proper dimensions.

JOHN the baptist was a witness in the matter in hand. He was fent before his face to point him out to the people, to call them to believe in him, and to declare what and who he was, and what they were to believe concerning him. John is drawn in the history as the fittest to be a witness of any man that ever appeared, either before or after him. From a child in the wilderness, he was nearly as detached from the world, as if he had not been a native of it. The extraordinary habits of simplicity and austerity he had contracted, prevented his being brought under obligations of any fort, which embarraffed, and ensnared others. The face of nature furnished him with all the appurtenances that he chose, without connections, bargains, or trespass. He had no circle of acquaintance, nor line of connection in any class or order of men. He had nobody E 2

nobody, therefore, to oblige or disoblige; nothing among men to sooth or irritate his feelings, to tempt him to come short, or go beyond the line of truth. And again, for a keen and discerning mind, a piercing judgment and a powerful tongue, he excelled all men. John being thus free and disencumbered from every thing that could furnish a motive to extenuate, or exaggerate, in his testimony; we may, and we ought to hear him with attention.

HE was chosen thus qualified to go before his face to tell the people who, and what he was, as an object of faith, in order to remission of sins. Hear him then, Joh. 1. " John bare witness of " him faying, this was he of whom I spake, he "that cometh after me is preferred before me; for " he was before me. And of his fulness have " all we received, and grace for grace. The law " was given by Moses, grace and truth came by " JESUS CHRIST. No man hath feen God, the " only begotten fon, who is in the bosom of " the father, hath declared him. This is the re-" cord of John, when the Jews fent priests and "Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who art " thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but " confessed, I am not the CHRIST. What then? "I am the voice of one crying in the wilder-" nefs,

" nefs, make straight the way of the LORD, as faid " the prophet.-I baptize with water: but there " flandeth one among you, whom ye know not; " he it is, who coming after me, is preferred " before me; whose shoes latchet I am not " worthy to unloofe. Behold the lamb of God, " which taketh away the fin of the world. This " is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man "which is preferred before me; for he was be-" fore me. And I knew him not.—And John " bare record, faying, I faw the spirit descending " from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon " him. And I knew him not, but he that fent " me to baptize with water faid, Upon whom "thou shalt see the spirit descending and remain-" ing on him, the fame is he which baptizeth " with the holy ghost. And I saw, and bare re-" cord that this is the fon of Gop." "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I " am not the CHRIST, but that I am fent before " him. He that cometh from above is above " all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and " speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from " heaven is above all. The father loveth the fon, " and hath given all things into his hand. "that believeth on the fon, hath everlasting life; " he that believeth not the fon, shall not fee E 3 life;

"life; but the wrath of God abideth on

This is the fum and fubstance of John's evidence both before and after he knew him perfonally. There is nothing here to be seen that looks like correcting, or softening, or rather classing with the language used by Christ in drawing his own character. They speak the same thing. Son of God; coming down out of heaven; and being above all men; as being the author and giver of all grace, sounds here in all the sense and energy of the word: life eternal is believing him to be such; and wrath and eternal damnation is the punishment of not believing it.

John then is the fame, and agrees with our Lord in fense, and stile, and sound. I have proved already, that this world could furnish nothing to insluence his mind one way nor the other. All that could have any power over him was truth, and the concerns of the other world. In him we have a witness worth a thousand tongues: not a reed shaken with the wind, wavering, doubting, and contradicting himself: not clothed in soft clothing; not a dissembling courtier, whose yielding language always humours the times and passions of men: not a prophet only, but greater than a prophet; a greater had not been

been born of a woman; a burning and a shining light, to go before the face of the great God, while in his way to redeem the world from death and hell. He declares solemnly that Jesus was the son of God; the only begotten of the father; come down out of heaven; was above himself and all men, whose shoes he was unworthy to untie or carry.

From the testimony of John we turn to that of the father. If there was any excess of glory assumed by Jesus Christ; any thing blasphemous in sound or sense in what he said, or what might give any cause or colour to such a thing; his own glory, and the safety of his people would call him forth to correct the language, and either explain, or remove any sigurative or rhetorical phrase that sounded too high.

Now let us hear what he fays; for our Saviour fays that the father himself had borne witness
of him. He did so at his baptism. For when
our Lord came from the water, the heavens
were opened unto him; the spirit made a corporeal descent and abode upon him, and a voice
proclaimed, This is my beloved son in whom I
am well pleased. The other instance was at his
transfiguration. Before Peter, James, and John,
he was transfigured: his sace shone as the sun,

his

his raiment white as fnow, and bright as the light. Mofes and Elijah appeared in glory, and spake to him: and a voice out of the bright cloud over their heads, proclaimed, This is my beloved fon in whom I am well pleafed: hear ve him. There are other testimonies of the father, but these two shall suffice, because these are in form. It is easy to see here that these solemn declarations are in support of the claim of Jesus, and in answer to the charge of blasphemy. Men faid that he was not of God, God answers, he is my fon: men held that he was an enemy to God and hated him; God answers no, he is my beloved: they faid, that he blasphemed God and offended; but God faid, no, in him I am well pleased: they forbade one another to hear him affert a fonship and equality with God, and therefore, Gop commanded to hear him, Thus the testimony of God recognizes and repeats that of IESUS, and defends it against all who charged him with blasphemy. He called God his father, and Gop calls him his beloved fon; and fays, he does not offend, but please: in all he says and does, hear him, therefore. As if he would fay, you affirm that you are so deeply and truly concerned for my glory, and the honour of my name, as not to be able to endure fuch blasphemies

mies against me; but I tell you and your successors, that as he calls me his father, I call him my son. Know you therefore, that this is truth. I glory in him as my son, my real, and beloved son, I love him, and I praise him, I commend him for afferting it, and it is my delight and joy to hear it. By saying, that he blasphemes, you say that it would be a shame for me to own such a son; but I say, that as a son he is my joy, my glory, and eternal boast. You cry, let nobody hear him. I command every body to hear him, and to hear nobody that denies his son-ship.

By these testimonies then, the father joins the son, and afferts, that his claim was neither fraud, presumption, nor blasphemy; but that he was highly pleased and gloristed in being owned as a sather by such a son. This was therefore attended with appearances of glory as proofs of acceptance with God. Says the apostle, 2. Pet. i. 16, 17, 18. "We have not followed cunningly devised sables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but were eye witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the sather honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my be-

" loved fon, in whom I am well pleased. And " this voice which came from heaven, we heard " when we were with him in the holy mount." He had afferted that he was not of this world, but that he was the only begotten fon of God, and had come down from heaven. This men treated with rage, as blasphemy and lies not to be endured; and which proved him to be the wickedest of all men. Heaven, therefore, opens to him, fends two of her glorified inhabitants, even Moses and Elijah to wait upon him, and own him; and then God declares his fonship, according to his claim, and bids all men hear and believe it. This was evidently to honour the fon; to confirm his testimony; to establish the truth of his fonship; to confute opposers; and to reprove and counteract the abuse and dishonour with which he was treated as an enemy to God, even in form. Neither in the testimony of the father then, nor in the intervention of heaven, do we meet with any thing to correct the testimony of the son, either in sense or sound, but the contrary: it is in his favour controverfially: verbally repeats and afferts the affertions of Jesus, in answer to his opposers: and in direct contradiction to their charge of blasphemy, establishes his claim, and declares him a fon in the highest sense. NEXT

Next we turn to the testimony of the apostles after he had less the world. And for brevity sake, I shall only take one passage; and that shall be the first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. The apostle, to recommend the gospel of God, declares it superior to every thing that went before it, on account of its author and publisher. The former revelations were by prophets, but this by his son. He is described, in order to prove that he is far above all men and angels, who had been the publishers of the mind of God heretosore.

For instance, he is the son of GoD: the heir of all things: the creator of the worlds: the brightness of his glory: the express image of his person: the upholder of the universe by the power of his word: he purged away fin: he fat in majesty in high places: he is better than angels, and inherited a name fo much more excellent than they: God will be his father: will own his fonship: all the angels adore and serve him: the father acknowledges the fon to be God, whose throne is for ever and ever: the sceptre of his kingdom is juffice: he loves it, and hates wickedness, and is made glad therefore above all: he founded the earth: he framed the heavens: he is without end or change, and fitteth on the right DR. PRIESTLEY hand of Gop.

DR. PRIESTLY, as above, fays, that our LORD laboured to humble and fink himfelf, in order to diffuade and prevent the disciples falling into the great fin of thinking too high of him. If he did fo, it is certain he bestowed labour in vain on them. For either they could not, or they would not understand him, and consequently acted in lawless rebellion against him. By this chapter, and this is nothing but the real fense and scope of every chapter in every book of the new testament, it appears that the apostles took him quite in the other sense: that he would have them think him to be in nature and glory above all the thoughts and praise of angels and men. Taking it that they understood him fo, their writings and conduct is full of obedience and fidelity, But if they took it that he would have them underfland, that the great fin and offence of the world would be to think and speak too highly of him; and that their office was to warn the world of the danger of fo doing, it is certain that their conduct and writings were prepofterous, rebellious, and even blasphemous. For language cannot carry descriptions, and ascriptions of praise and adoration higher than theirs do, when they speak of him. They put him upon an equality with the father in all things, but in being a father. All the inequality

equality which they have pointed out and observed is, that the father is truly a father, and the son, a son truly. In every thing but this, and what effentially belongs to it, they set him up in the sace of the whole world, as God over all, infinite in power and glory. And I am certain that no person without evasion and sorce, can help thinking that they looked upon him in that light, and that their design is to make others do the same.

THE apostles knew that our LORD neither did, nor could give cautions not to think and speak highly of him. It was a thing impossible for perfect truth and goodness ever to say or mean. It would have been as unbecoming in him to warn people against thinking highly of him, as it is in Dr. Priestly not to do it. The Doctor has taken much pains, and bestowed incredible labours, to humble JESUS CHRIST, the prince of life, the LORD of glory, the brightness of the father's glory and express image of his person; and has delivered warnings upon warnings against thinking too highly of him; but he has taken no pains at all, nor once warned the world against thinking or speaking too highly of Joseph Priestly. On the contrary, to induce the world to think very highly of him, he affures us that

he is Doctor of Laws, Fellow of the Royal Society, &c. &c.: talks of his philosophical apparatus, the finest ever known; of his investigations; of his electrical experiments; of his marvellous discoveries, and wonders. In a word, labour, learning, honorary titles, and all other means and ways, are made use of to make all men think highly, and very, very highly of Dr. Priestly for their salvation; and to keep them all from the great sin of thinking highly of Jesus Christ!!!

But the apostles humbled themselves and honoured Jesus Christ with praise and divine homage.

The last witness to be appealed to shall be his works. By these I mean only his miracles. These are surviving witnesses, and speak as much to the point now, as in the days wherein they were wrought. But as most of the eminent servants of God wrought miracles, how can the miracles of Jesus prove that he was any thing more than they were? Moses and the following prophets by miracles proved that they were messengers of God sent to men. And if miracles proved that much only in their case, how can they prove more in his? If it proved only a prophet in the former, will it prove the latter to be a son?

EVIDENTLY,

EVIDENTLY, and by the same rule, each prophet, in the name of God wrought miracles to prove that he was God's prophet; which by that means was put out of doubt. Jesus wrought miracles in his own name, not to prove that he was a prophet, but the son of God, which thereby was put out of doubt. For as miracles wrought by virtue of their mission, proved their mission; so also those that were wrought by virtue of his sonship, removed all ground of doubt or suspicion of his sonship by the same rule.

Again, there is an evident appearance of fuperiority in the manner of acting on the occasion. Others laboured fometimes under difficulties, which never appeared in him: they fometimes failed, he never did: others proceeded by prayer and invocation, calling and begging for helps; he did all in his own name. I fay fo and fo, was his stile upon all occasions. When other men did wonders, they disclaimed the power, and forbade the people to impute it to any power, holiness, or virtue in them, but Jesus never did fo: when people worshipped the apostles at the fight of their miracles, they forbade them, and rent their clothes, but Jesus always received the homage with approbation. They told the people that they were men of like passions with themselves, but Jesus

never

never did. They faid that they had fins, and did fin, and that if they should say otherwise, they would thereby prove themselves liars; but IESUS fays, that no man could convince him of fin. They defired the people to pray that they might be directed and affifted, but Jesus never defired one person to do so for him. In a word, he wrought all his miracles by virtue of his fonship, with an air of ease and superiority which became him, who thought it not robbery to be equal with Gop. It behoved him therefore, upon every occasion, to use only his own name. And as it was forefeen, that the great fin of the world, would be, directly or indirectly, denying his divinity, it was wifely ordered that the apostles should work no miracle in the name of the father, but in the name of Jesus Christ only. Indeed his miracles, peculiarly breathed divinity, having in them more kindness and benignity than any that preceded them. They were also without number. The delicacy and wisdom with which they were done, carries the fame idea; for he neither fought his patients, nor shunned them when they came. Sometimes he cured a patient unasked, but not often. The diffressed were relieved without rewards on the one hand, or oftentation of charity on the other. In all things, and throughout the whole,

whole, he was GoD; equally free, and equally far from ill natured frowns, and also from that flexible and unmanly pity and softness which in others lessens the dignity and worth of goodness itself. And thus his miraculous works were a witness of his sonship and divinity. And he reckoned these the most incontestible of all evidence in support of his claim.

GREAT was the contest, and great the embarraffment that these occasioned. Some cried out, how can he be a bad man, who works fuch miracles and does fuch wonders! Others cried as vehemently, how can he be a good man, who makes himself equal with Gop! He works his miracles, not to make himself a prophet, or an extraordinary messenger come from GoD: in any capacity, in any degree of honour of this nature, we have offered to receive him. But he despises every thing of the kind, and works every miracle positively and point-blank to make himself the son of God, and therefore equal with God. The voice of the people was ftrong, and founded high with his works of energy and might. This his enemies could not deny, nor attempt to call in question. But, as before, to evade the force of the argument, they afferted that these were done by the help of the very worst of all the devils

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in hell. An idea so irrational and wicked, as, perhaps, has not its equal. But the truth is, they had been put to their shifts; and senseless as it was, they had rather adopt it than yield to this powerful evidence of his sonship.

III. His divinity, or fonship, appears from his infallible and unerring conduct, I mean in various situations, public and private; and especially in his last sufferings. Had he been a creature, weak, and fallible, we should have found him so in his progress through life: we should soon detect him and find him out and discover our own nature by slips and infirmities in him daily, and thereby be able to prove that he was one of us: but in him is nothing seen that betrays our weakness, and places him upon a level with us; or any thing that makes him less than God.

I SHALL here view him in a state of safety; under apprehensions of danger; in temptation; under insults; in snares; in applause, and lastly, in sufferings. In each of these situations, mortals prove themselves to be weak and frail. Let us therefore follow the LORD JESUS through these, and mark as we go, whether he appears to be a frail man to be pitied, or God to be adored.

When freed from apprehensions of danger, all mortal

mortal men are careless; some are more so than others. This is partly their infirmity and partly their fault. To be vigilant and on the watch is satisfatiguing and painful: this makes frail nature ever ready to drop her attention, by which it often comes to pass, that an hour of safety, proves more satal than that of dread and danger; for men are surprised here and undone by being off their guard.

BUT in JESUS, a careless symptom never discovers itself. Retired, in the midst of unsuspected friends and unexposed, not a trace appears of one that had for one moment dropped the watch. Follow him into a private retreat, furrounded by those with whom he had lived in habits of friendship and familiarity, and you will discover the fame vigilance, with her eyes open, and as fully awake as in the hour of danger and alarm. He never appears to have been furprised: he is not catched, or taken in at unawares: he never dropped an inadvertant hint: he never delivered an uncautious speech: his presence of mind is perfect, and nothing is feen about him any where to impress the mind with the idea of the careless moment of a person negligently secure, and off his guard. No apprehension of safety, no certainty of good will, no affurance of innocency

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and fincerity, nor tokens of attachment, could draw him to lavish out his mind in a weak and unmanly stile and manner.

WHEN we endeavour to be cautious and watchful, we are in bonds and pain; Jesus was in none. In us, it is inftruction and even force; but in him it was nature. When David was vexed with his frailty here, he renews his care thus: Pfal. xxxix. " I faid I will take heed to " my ways, that I fin not with my tongue: I " will keep my mouth with a bridle. I was " dumb with filence, I held my peace, even from " good, and my forrow was flirred. My heart " was hot within me, while I was musing the " fire burned: then I spake with my tongue," Here is refolution, and force, and a bridle, in order to be upon his guard, to prevent incautious and indifcreet speeches. But the force and refraint used, drove him to the other side, to be too cautious; and then, back again to his old course, to be too open. And his inability herein, ended in a confession of his own frailty: and not only that, but in a declaration that man in his best flate is altogether vanity, and a mere shadow. For in his primitive state, he was off his guard, and by that means fell into the fnare laid for him. But Jesus never faid that he would take . heed,

heed, and put a bridle on his mouth to keep his tongue from fin; nor did he ever confess that he was filent when he ought to speak; or speak when he ought to be filent. Eve was off her guard, and spake too much, and therefore was ensnared by the devil: Adam was off his guard. and spoke too little; for he hearkened unto the woman, when he ought to have filenced her, and thereby was taken. In nothing, therefore, is the divinity and perfect Godhead of Jesus more vifible, than in his being never off his guard, at any time, nor in any degree. Follow him my friends, try him, fearch him, and mark him here: and if you can neither see, nor hear, any thing unguarded, in any place, nor in any degree: if uniform vigilance without unnatural force, without that laborious toil which is visible in us, is seen: if you fee him go every where with unerring eafe and discretion; adore him as God, as I do, and receive no other.

2. View him in a state of danger. Here mortals discover who, and what they are, either by insensibility or unmanly timidity; by excess of considence, or else are over agitated and depressed. And thus their littleness is rendered visible and makes it easy to know who they are.

BUT here JESUS CHRIST proved himself to be. not a weak man, but the mighty Gop. He always discovers a sense of his situation, accompanied with feelings and emotions, the most natural and fuitable to the occasions. He knew his enemies. and what they were doing; he knew that they were preparing his death, and that they should fucceed: he had the whole scene of what they would do, and what he should suffer, regularly before him, and often foretold it. The last time he did so, he worded it to this effect. Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the son of man shall be delivered into the hands of finful men; and the priefts and the elders, and the gentiles, shall condemn him, and foit on him, and mock him, and fet him at nought, and scourge him, and kill him; and the third day he shall rise again. Here is neither ignorance nor stupor; neither rashness nor timidity: neither fwelling confidence nor dejection; neither contempt of fufferings nor finking difmay; neither defiance of enemies nor an affectation of ferenity; neither under nor overawed, by the approach of death. All is regular and perfectly natural. He was in his way to the place of danger, and had the fuccess of his enemies against his life before him in all its dreadful particulars: he looks at them; he numbers them; he foretells them.

them. But in fo doing, not a word drops to shock the mind, or to grate upon the human ear, in fense or in found. He fees: he knows: he apprehends: he feels: he fpeaks. But all is grave, all is foft and folemn. All is full of graceful and beautiful fensibility. Here is nothing unruly; nothing dull and torpid; here are tender feelings, touched and naturally moved: here is quick fensibility wording its own impressions: here are inveterate enemies in the very act of malevolence and murder, named and defcribed, without one threat, without one exasperating speech, without one railing word, without one barbarous found, or harsh accent to be heard! He did not tell his disciples, never mind-I care nothing about them-I despise them, and all they can do. I treat them with disdain. He did not call them by hard names: he did not brand their conduct with stigmatizing epithets. He did not foretell his refurrection with pomp of stile, with extravagant language, nor with triumphant infult. His faying, that the fon of man shall be delivered into the hands of finful men, and that the priefts, and elders, and people would condemn him, and fpit on him, and mock him, and fet him at nought, and crucify, and kill him; and then adding, that the third day he should rife again;

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is a passage not to be paralleled. He knows all the evils before him, but is not distracted; he fees and feels, but is not unhinged: he is moved, but not hurried: he is not dull: he is not dumb: he is not exasperated. He names his enemies; not the worst of men; not murderers; not culprits; not demons; not devils; but men: priests; scribes, and elders. He did not say, I shall be delivered into the hands of a fet of villains; or into the hands of barbarous and inhuman ruffians; but into the hands of finners; which is only the moderate term of blame which is indefinitely applied to all men alike. His refurrection is introduced, not with a retaliating air; not edged with farcastic triumph; not with boiling revenge, nor in lofty terms; but in the sparing stile of moderation.

EVERY word here is a wonder. The word that gave life to the dead, and health to the deceased: the word that rebuked the devils and cast them out by thousands, and quelled the riotous elements of winds and waves was great: the word that gave being to the light; that stretched out the heavens; that said let the dry land appear, was wonderful. But every word in this passage is more than a wonder: is greater than a miracle! Here every thing was provok-

ing him to hard words, and failed. The face of danger then, the greatness of it, the prevalence, the approach, and certainty of it, with all the cruelty and perfidy that presented itself thereon, could draw nothing from Jesus that made him look less than God.

PAUL in the face of danger spoke thus. Acts xx. V. 22. "Behold I go bound in the " foirit to Terufalem, not knowing the things that " shall befall me there, fave that the holy Ghost witneffeth in every city, faying, that bonds and " afflictions abide me: but none of these move " me, neither count I my life dear unto me, fo " that I might finish my course with joy, and "the ministry which I have received of the "LORD JESUS, to testify the gospel of the grace " of Gop." Here is one of the greatest of men in the face of dangers, sensible of his situation and expressing himself in a manner every way worthy of his character: no mere man could feemingly speak with more becoming fortitude. But still the voice that I hear, is that of a creature; and I can discern and diftinguish the found of it as such, with all certainty. I know the speaker to be a finite man, and a fellow creature. By talents and improvement, he is indeed the most excellent of human nature, and very far above me; yet the stile of

the passage puts him down by nature, upon a level with myself. But in the speech of Jesus, in his way to the place of suffering, I can discern nothing that levels him with me, and puts him down as a fellow creature. The stile does not sound like ours: the voice that I hear in it, is not that of man, but the voice of God, who is over all and above all, blessed for ever.

ONCE more, Jesus, in foretelling his fufferings, did not profess that state of dependence, and hope for help to carry him through, that other men did, and ought to do. Not a word to fignify that he feared that he should fail; or that he hoped for help; or that he needed any: he did not fay, that Gop would fuccour him; nor that God would raise him, but he would rise himself. True he did pray to his father, yet not as a creature, but as his own fon: not as weak and indigent, but as honouring his father, and perfonating others. And therefore, he did his work in his own name, and by his own power. He was God manifest in flesh, the most infathomable of all characters. He had more tender feelings and fense of pain and injuries than all the creatures in heaven and earth. But a view of pain and abuses, not to be compared, could not extort from him the flartling dread; the fudden fear ;

fear; the rapid stile; the vehement sound; the sudden gust of passion; or ought beside which puts him down upon a level with mortal men. All the words came from the infathomable depth within, and are replete with the sound of wisdom, understanding, moderation, and temper, every way persect and divine.

3. VIEW him in his temptation. His whole life, indeed, was nothing else: but by it here I mean that in the wilderness. At his baptism he was publicly declared from heaven to be the fon of Gop; and was thereupon, immediately led, yea, driven by the holy spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil: he that is emphatically fo called as the father of other devils, and the ablest of them all. He was alarmed at this declaration of fonfhip; being altogether new and unheard of among men, He defired leave to try him; and feemingly, as in the case of Job, undertook to disprove what God afferted. And it is natural to suppose, that he was impatient and impetuous to have fomething done to stop the circulation of what he was fo fearfully interested in: and, that he might have no cause to complain of advantages and partiality in favour of the tempted, as he did in the temptation of Job, the spirit hastened Jesus into the deserts;

and placed him in a fituation, destitute, disconsolate, and dismal. Here he was tried with incessant temptations during a fast of forty days and nights, without any thing to alleviate the affliction; or the benefit of society, to divert the attention for one moment, from the tedious hours of pain and fatigue.

We are not told what the matter of the temptation was, till it came to its closing article, when our Lord discovered symptoms of hunger. The subject of it evidently was, his souship; for the history says, as soon as the voice from heaven had declared him the beloved son of God, in whom he was well pleased; that he was immediately driven into the wilderness to be tempted. The matter of alarm, was the truth of this declaration: the matter of the temptation therefore must be something urged to call it in question, and oblige him to give it up.

THE detail of the temptation during the forty days is not given: an obvious reason offers itself for the silence; that it would be too long to tally with the general brevity of the evangelical history. But more than that the matter urged against his title by the devil, could be nothing but what will come into the mind naturally by easy resections and meditations on the subject: and that is, what would naturally

rife in the minds of carnal men against it. The devil in the temptation was personating all such men, acting their part, and urging their objections to his claim. All things whatsoever that men of carnal minds, under the power of pride, state, learning, avarice, sensuality, and lusts, would object to his title, was the matter of the temptation, improved and urged by the tempter to make him give it up: or, which would answer the same end, doubt of its truth and reality. We may naturally conclude that he would therefore address himself to him in sense and substance to the following effect—

ENDEAVOURS, it feems, are going to be made, to fet you over us as our Meffiah: but the obfcurity of your original; the meanness of your parentage; the narrow, the scanty allowance on which you live; and the uncreditable circumstances in which you have always appeared, forbid our faith. The Messiah, is to be the son of God, and the son of David; and consequently, must needs make an appearance worthy of such parentage.

THE son of the worthy David, then, you would fain have us believe you to be: that son of David, who is to be the highest glory of his house: that son, who is to be the honour and ornament

ornament of his family: that fon of renown, who is to fit upon his throne, and raise his name to the highest pitch of same. But do you seem to appear to others, or even to yourself, to be that illustricus person? What is there that marks you out, and points us to you as such? Weigh the matter thoughtfully and consider, that people must have something visible in you to lead the mind up to David by looking at you: something to strike the eye that David is before us, with the promised improvement in his son.

DAVID was a hero, a prince, a king, a general, a fenator of the first name among men: his private property was immense: he possessed inexhaustible treasures: he commanded revenues vast and extensive: he sat upon a throne: was a man of appearance and influence: he wore a crown: he rode in state: he commanded armies, the finest in all antiquity: he was shouted among the captains: and was great in the lift of heroes, ancient worthies, and mighty men. Crowned heads honoured and dreaded his name: nations were ftruck with awe, and the world heard and listened to his fame. But what of all this can we see in you? Is there a trace? Is there a fign, or fmallest resemblance of any fuch thing? Confider what you are going to do, and weigh the nature of your business among

among men: remember, that you have to do with mankind, who are not all ignorant and credulous. You are to publish your descent from David: but you will find fome keen and discerning minds among them, who will expect plain facts before they will yield an affent. You know your parents to be indigent; yourfelf to have been bred in obscurity; to have been brought up in Galilee; that you are a native, an inhabitant of the land of Cabal: have been educated among the Galileans, from whom mankind have long agreed to look for nothing good or creditable: you have been a carpenter there: I and others have known you as fuch, and your father before you.: and thus you have made yourfelf too cheap and little to gain credit to fet you up in this high state. What family of respectability knows you? What man of repute will own you?

Now feeing that the matter is exactly as I have stated it; can you have the face to stand up before mankind, as it were with the ax in your hand, and, the sweat upon your brow, by which you get a scanty morsel, and say that you are David's son? That you are the long expected son; that you are the promised; the royal son of the illustrious David; that you are the heir of his throne; to advance his name; to establish

establish his kingdom; and to repair the honour and perfect the glory of his government? Will you say, I am the king of Israel? I am the sovereign of the world, and am to rule all nations? Will you be able to say, David and Solomon were nothing but me in miniature? They were but shadows of me? Their glory, riches, power, and majesty were but little beginnings which are to have their full revelation and appearance in me? This you must do, and more, if you persist in your pretensions.

WHAT then will be the consequence? What will become of you in the management of such an affair? What will the people think of you? What will they say to you, and each other? Will not some burst out a laughing? Will not some be merry? Will not some be angry? Will not some be entraged? Will not some be amazed? Will not some be out of patience? Will not enemies mock? And will not your friends hang down their 'heads with shame?

But now not to pursue the chain of difficulties arising from the natural views and feelings of the people; let me suppose, that David, the worthy David himself was to hear of your name and pretensions, and that we were to be witnesses of his coming to you to furrender himself and his all into your fuperior hands. We should see him come amidst his intrepid foldiers: he is led onand shouted by the mighty captains, heroes, and valiant commanders, that headed his troops, and made the earth tremble: he is feen among the ancient chiefs and wonthies, whose fame the ages have refounded: he wears his crown: he is feated on his throne, that he might come down and refign it to you, and lay his crown at your feet with its attendant honours: I fay, suppose David was thus to appear? Would he know you? I wish I could get you to speak, that I might have it out of your own mouth, how this point stands in your mind: but it feems by your looks that I am not to be favoured with one word; else I would fain alk you, can you believe, can you perfuade yourself that the high and mighty David would know you? Would he acknowledge you as that august personage, in whom he, with all his glory and majesty, was to be absorbed and fwallowed up? Would he point at you and fay to us, there is the king of Ifrael, before whom every thing royal, every thing great and grand in me, is to be eclipfed and pass away as a shadow? All my government, dignity, and majefty are in him rendered visible, and in him are perfected? Do

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you think that he would thus point you out to us, and surrender all into your hands? This you cannot do. Do you not rather believe, that the first sight of you, would amaze and confound him? Would it not silence him? Would it not throw him into soliloquies to this effect? Is this the son, in whom all my greatness was to be swallowed up? Is it before him I am to vanish and pass away as a shadow? A poor man! The ax in his hand! The sweat on his brow! Born in a necessitous samily!

TELL me now, would not these soliloquies be natural? or rather unavoidable? Nay, leave all this out of the question, and let us suppose that David was to pay you only a common visit. He comes in his splendid chariot: he is attended with his elegant retinue: he rides to the door of your humble habitation: you might happen to be coming home with the ax in one hand, and a hammer in the other, with sweat and satigue in your face to a sparing dinner! What do you think of it? How would he look? Would he not hang down his head? Would he not return, unable to look back or look up?

Consider what I say, and I think you must confess that no man ever thought of attempting any thing so untoward. You must know that we fee the vast disproportion between you and the worthy David. He was a man of appearance and splendor, you have nothing to awaken attention, or strike the eye: he was grand, you are mean: he was rich, you are poor: he dwelt in a palace, you are in a cot. How are mankind to answer it then, to themselves or others, were they to believe you? How are they to support the shame in which you will involve them? How are you to gain credit to set you up? Point out your personal dignity: place your respectability before us, and make yourself a man of appearance to render it reasonable to receive you as David's son, come to repair the honour of his kingdom, and arise it above its ancient splendor.

But this is not all; you make yourself to be the son of God. Your extravagant ideas here, I should think, must drop of themselves. There is not an appearance, not a symptom in you to bring that idea to any one's mind. On the contrary, you carry the evident appearance of a sallen son of Adam. True, true, there was something like a miracle whispered about at your birth; and an odd story it is. It afferts that shepherds came to Bethlehem: it was contrived to be when the town was all hurry and consusion by the imposition of a tax:

G 2

party

party principles and spirit ran high: disputes filled every place: bufiness and arguments for, and against, engaged universal attention, and furnished the topics of the general conversation of every class alike. In this noise and din, the shepherds came and delivered their story: they faid, angels had told them, that CHRIST the LORD and Saviour of the world was born that morning; and that he was a swaddling in a manger in that town; and that they had come and found it fo. But what was faid to them? Nothing! Not a word. It is faid, indeed, that fome wondered: possibly some ignorant people in the street. But fo far were they from making any impression on the public mind, that not a person went to see, whether what they faid was true or false. The flory died with the moment of publication, and expired with its own found. Nor is it to be wondered at. It was told by illiterate country men: it is confessed that they had been running after their flocks, without natural rest, nobody knows how long: they perhaps dropped down with sleep, unknown to themselves: they dreamed: in the hurry of their imagination they came to town: they fearched the stables: they found fomething that corresponded with their dream, and told it as a wonder from above. But what do they fay?

fay? Why, that you was that morning a new born infant, a fwaddling in a manger: and that your mother was delivered of you there, because there was no room at the inn. But I dare say, you agree with me in opinion that there were rooms enough in such a town as Bethlehem for all who appeared people of property, and able to pay for them. Upon the whole, this story is more against you than for you, and may do more to hinder than to help you.

THERE was another story in circulation about wife men from the East, who came to Jerusalem in quest of you. They had been hampered, and had their rest broke by a star: they quit house, home, friends, and country, and come to Jerusalem . to fay that it was the star of a king born to reign there. Childish as the story founded, it did a great deal of hurt: it disturbed the minds of many people disposed to be quiet: hindered lawful bufiness: created disorder, and caused many useless enquiries; and, in the end, the death of many innocent children. Whether you was the very child that caused all that mischief, I will not take upon me to determine. You mean to affert it I suppose. But to return to the wife men, who came in quest of you. What came of them at last? Why, after they followed their

G 3 ftar

flar and found you, they returned—not to Jerufalem, to relate what they had feen for the benefit of others, faithfully, like honest men, according to promise and appointment. No—traitors—
they slipped back—they sneaked away home—not
the way they came, lest any body should ask
them where they had been. They clandestinely
slipped away—They would neither speak, nor be
spoken to—They would have no more to be seen,
than their backs! Poor souls! I believe they
have never been heard of from that day to this!
These things, I should think, you cannot look
upon as sufficiently free from ambiguity and sufpicions to establish the credibility of your sonstate.

This appears to me to be found reasoning, and how you can evade the force of it, is strange to me, which yet with concern, I perceive in your looks. No answers—no emotions of any fort—no features in motion of like, or dislike!—nothing enters—nothing approaches your feelings! That undisturbed and patient perseverance that appears in your looks in defiance of common sense, is very surprising, and even distressing, as your scheme may occasion great and various calamities.

THERE was, indeed, at your baptifm, a fomething: call it fingular: call it unaccountable: call

it miraculous: yea, let it be a miracle, and that of the first rate. Yet miracles cannot stand before the face of common fense, when they are. opposites. And here let us enter into the nature, and properties of this subject. Let us reason a little on the place and defign of miracles; and confider where their evidence is to be admitted, and where not. A miracle is fomething fupernaturally done, to bear witness where our senses cannot immediately act, nor collect their evidence. This proves that it is not to put out our eyes, nor to call in question their common evidence. It is by the power and evidence of our fenses that, we know a miracle to be fuch, and diffinguish it from what is common. The voice of miracles then, is not to be heard against that of common [fenfe; nor their evidence to be admitted against the testimony of our eyes and ears.

Now, our eyes and ears affure us, that you are a descendant of Adam: an individual of mankind: the general system of human nature in its degraded condition, is visible to all in you. The image, the figure in which you stand before the world, is human: the features and visage which you wear are the same: the degraded form, and habit of an earthly man, always accompany you wherever you go: hunger and thirst afflict you:

G 4 weariness

weariness and drowsiness expose you to all the wants and inconveniences of men in common. Miracles are seldom, suspicious, short, and vanish away out of sight; but this appearance of yours, remains always in sight, and is an evidence against your divinity constant as the day, and clear as the light. It stares mankind in the face whereever you are; and compels them to put you down as one of themselves. And if therefore, you will have the face to stand up and say that you are God, and call upon men to believe and revere your divinity, my fears are, that you will drive them raving, and provoke them to take up stones to stone you. And hereby you will involve yourself in danger, and others in sin.

But if I take you right, you look upon John the baptist as a man of weight in your interest. He has been, it is true, a man of popularity, but now that is gone irrecoverably. He is a composition of oddities: a figure to look at. The human frame in him is upside down, and all its innocent inclinations are smothered and lost by barbarity and violence, put in practice against himfelf. He sled from the face of the public, when a child: has lived in the woods a life of studied revenge upon the innocent inclinations of men; he forsook the world: despised the established course

course of improvement, in things civil and facred; hating all the beautiful laws, and great benefits of fociety. Neither house, nor home, nor food, nor drink, nor clothes, nor kin, nor ought elfe that is dear and natural to man, could engage him. Sour thoughts, and ill nature breed and multiply in his mind. Away he goes into the wood, and lives like a beaft. He is expected no more, and lost in the minds of men. At last, he appears: he proclaims and afferts that he is a harbinger, a public herald, a voice fent to cry unto men: the public mind is impressed: men are variously moved: expectations run high, and almost all are ready to embrace him, and receive his baptism. But what was all this owing to? Why, they were taken at unawares. He rushed upon them out of the wood, and by his impetuofity aftonished them before they had time to confider. But as foon as they had time to deliberate, and view the man and his business, they found they had like to fall into the hands of a devil. And hereupon, the most creditable part of the nation acted fensibly and forfook him. He has opened his mouth against the glory of this enlightened age, with every thing wherein it excels: he has taken liberties with religion, derived from traditions, and polished by eminent men:

has traduced the finest characters of his time: has deprived many good people of peace: he is odd in food: odd in dress: troublesome: a hater of the world; and in a word an unfashionable man. What can such a man do for you then? Can he add weight or credit to your cause? Will any body think the better of you, because it may be said, that John the baptist is on your side? But if I am not greatly mistaken in people's looks and faces, his licentious tongue will soon put him out of office for you, and every body else.

HAD he acted with skill, and gone about quietly to pick a little here and learn a little there: had he informed himself of the turn of the time and temper of the people, in order to know how to humour, and where to yield, till he had made the Pharifees and Saducees ready to receive you; your cause would have looked respectable. He faid that he was fent to prepare your way, if we may believe you to be the person, and make all people ready to receive you. But has he not prepared the people against you, and made all ready to oppose you? Had there been prudence and good nature in the work, who knows what might have been done in your favour? Had he, when he faw the bettermost fort of people condescending

descending to hear him, and offering themselves for baptism in such numbers, received them in a manner fuitable to their eminence for wealth and piety; had he baptized them with thanksgiving and affurances of the pleasure he had in administering his baptism to such worthy and respectable people; had he courted their acquaintance; confulted them; begged their interest, and took their. advice, and do nothing without asking their opinion; had he wifely forbore meddling with things which he knew would gall and offend; had he endeavoured to render himself agreeable to all, and delivered things that would not disturb, but would fit with eafe, and have a winning effect upon the mind, as every minister that intends to do good and be respected must do, his popularity had continued, and the cause would have looked fomewhat like. But instead of this, he ran out of the wood like a wild man, and indifcriminately fermonized all alike, with exhortations and rebukes, without troubling himself about high or low, nor who was hurt or healed, and back into the wood to eat locusts and wild honey, and fleep under the trees; and they might like or diflike, he cares for nobody. This is not the way to do good; if a minister would do good, he must treat people in a mild and winning way.

And for want of this, John, instead of making your way plain, has stopped it up. He gave wounds to fine seelings; disgust to good breeding; exasperated those of lively minds; and became so insufferable to people of rank and families, that they believed, and said at last, that he could be nothing but one of the devils come among men, to preach. A man must be very bad indeed, before any people could be so russed. And yet this is the very man to prepare the minds of the people to receive you. Had you meant to prepare them to be firm and resolute against you, you could not have done it better, or have found a fitter man?

But forry I am to see, that nothing seems to impress you. Your face is like the very slint itself. Not a look, not a feature moves either way: either for or against! Could I but get you to speak, though it were against, and show some emotions, though they were those of dislike and opposition, I could make something of you: I could have it to say that you are this, or that; could tell people that you are a person to be impressed, and one that can return an answer when occasion requires.

Bur, to tell the truth, I have been informed that a fingular fort of filence has always marked

your conduct. For when the company would be indulging themselves in innocent liberties to deliver their opinion of their neighbours and their affairs, you have been observed to be always dumb: not a foul should know your thoughts of any man, either in a private or public station. How much lively conversation have you hindered by this! How many minds have you made uneasy! And the circulation of things, the knowledge of which would be of great use, you have prevented. But this invincible filence; this infathomable referve, will not help you to friends, nor make you popular. In order to popularity, a man must be facetious, and join and contribute to the life and ease of the conversation, and make people wish for his company again. But this referve has hurt many minds and alienated numbers from you already. You think miracles may do; but miracles to put out people's eyes, and nullify the evidence of common fenfe, will do nothing. Nay, if I may judge of others feelings by my own, they will increase the offence and render you but the more insufferable.

This I take to be the temptation; worded, I suppose, by the tempter short and sparing; but when worded at large, was in substance and sense as above. I mean that part of it which took place

place previous to what is recorded. I believe it, because these were the ideas with which the Jews were inspired against our LORD afterward, when the devil had transferred the business in a certain fense to be carried on and continued by them. These were the ideas they had of him: these the objections they urged against him: and, this was the nature of the hatred they bore to him. It was the disproportion that appeared between him and their ideas of the fon of Gop and David, in point of visible dignity, wealth and grandeur. They were too gross and ignorant worldlings, to reason so far as that the wealth and grandeur of this world were too mean and worthless, to make any parts of the glory of the fon of God when he came. People under the power of luft, cannot fee, nor reason; else it were easy to argue that wealth and honour, which he distributed among good, bad, and indifferent, indifferiminately, could not be made an ornament and excellency of his character, to recommend him to esteem, and procure him reception. All the state, property, and magnificence of this world were dust and dirt under his feet: he was too great therefore to be made great by these things. Yea, his greatness and glory confifted in being without them. But this was the objection of men to place him,

him, and was, as is reasonable to conclude, what the devil managed against him forty days and nights.

My reason for concluding that our Lord made no reply during the above period is, that the history is filent. This looks as if there was nothing to be related but what the tempter faid, which was needless to be detailed, because, the very fame subject would foon after become a matter of public dispute, between our LORD and men, inspired by him. The reasoning against his divinity would be the fame; the humility and lowliness of his appearance. This stained and reproached all worldly state and glory. Carnal and fenfual men have all their delights and hopes in these things; and devils have all their hopes and affurances of fuccess to betray and ruin from the fame. Therefore the reasoning and objection of the one, would be those of the other. And on this account, no answer was returned to any thing urged by the tempter, because they were to be revived, or rather repeated, by proud and devilish men afterwards, and then duly answered; for the difgust and offence to men and devils was in nature the same.

AND beside, I think that not to reply in this case, where a defence was useless, and therefore needless,

needless, is of a piece with our LORD's conduct. Conversion was not intended; for the devil is not to become a convert, nor any means to be used to make him such. And after the temptation of the forty days was finished, and the devil renewed it by discovering signs of hunger, even then, though our Lord fpoke yet it was no answer to the question which was the matter of the temptation. The question was, Are you the fon of Goo? life your are turn these stones into bread, &c. The answer was, that man did not depend wholly on bread, nor was he to expect deliverances, if he tempted Gon. The two anfwer, went fo far as to flate what fort of faith men in general were to exercise in circumstances of want or danger. But there was nothing in either to inform, or fatisfy the tempter, whether he was, or was not, the fon of Gop. It is this alone he wanted to know; but from what was faid, could gather nothing to remove his doubts, or fatisfy his mind either way. The great mystery of godliness, God manifest in flesh, was as far above the reach of his intellects, as it was above those of his servants. He tried to pump this out of our Lord for forty days; and I believe had in return nothing but filence and looks which increafed his perplexity, and bewildered him; being unable

unable to make it out to himfelf, whether they were human or divine. I know that the LORD Jesus acted to the glory of his own name. let it be by filence or language: he does every thing in a manner worthy of adoration; but his filence here feems to frike deeper. For to let fuch a fuccession of provocations, come, and go, without one hoffile glance or retorting look: and to turn, upon the most insulting hints and arguments, a fet of mild and infathomable features, which furpassed all his interpretation, and rendered regular inferences impossible is altogether in the sublime. They were not the filent looks and features of ignorance, like one at a loss what to fay; nor those of stubborness, like one that hardened himfelf by a ftern resolution not to speak; for then the devil would have known who he was, and would have tempted him no more, but would have faid, I need not ask any further who he is, because I can read it in his face. But our LORD looked immoveably and perfectly human; and yet, intermixed with the looks and features, was fomething more than human. Sometimes he would think him to be one thing, and the next minute another, bewildered, hurried, and agitated to and fro, that he could pump nothing out from within, nor explain, nor interpret any thing to his own H purpose

purpose to get at the intelligence he wanted; and was obliged to give over at last, and remain as ignorant as he begun.

AFTER the forty days expired, it feems that the tempter withdrew in vexation and despair: but taking a turn to fee his antagonist once more, he discovered symptoms of hunger, and visible figns of inclination to food. Upon this change of appearance, the temptation is renewed, and takes another turn. And when the rempter came to him, he faid, If thou be the fon of Gop, command that these stones be made bread. As the word is, speak, that these stones may become bread. In this temptation the devil proves what ideas he had of the fon of God. He knew, that if he was the person, he could, by only opening his lips, turn stones into bread: his word would do it without asking, praying, or calling upon any one. The devil confesses that if our LORD could, and would do that, his doubts would be at an end. He knew that the fon of God was the person, who had spoke the stones into being; and that therefore, he could fpeak the same into bread. And as no other person could give existence, or change the mode of it, by his word, here was a just and fair offer now to settle the point beyond all dispute.

THIS temptation is worded sparingly, but the things fpoken are implicitly many. It is implied, that it is a work to which no reasonable objection could be made. It is easy; for the son of God can do it by a word spoken; it is not extravagant; it is not manna, but bread, the allowance of the poorest of the sons of men: it is not vain, for there is a real hunger and an immediate call for it: it is not oftentatious, for the place is private: it will be no incroachment, for here are stones in plenty without use, or owners: it will be very beneficial, it will ease and deliver, as if he should fay, you and me from a great deal of pain: it will remove hard thoughts of your father, who otherwise seems to be leaving you in real want of necessaries: and I shall have it to fay to people, not to be afraid to follow you, that you are a man who can turn stones into bread by speaking to them. This will draw converts without number, and help your cause. In a word, if you can speak stones into bread, you are the fon of Gop: if you cannot, you are not his fon; and I know you cannot be. The matter is brought to its criss. You are now brought to a fituation, wherein you must prove that you are, or, that you are not, the fon of God. Speak then, to these stones.

H 2 Luke

Luke fays, fpeak to this stone: perhaps, he took up one out of the heap, and held it in his hand, and laid, speak to this stone. I feel, I fee, I know this to be a flone; speak it into bread in my hand; and then I shall know for myself, and shall be able to prove to others, that you are the very fon of Goo. The reply. It is written, man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Gop. That is to fay, I honour the appointment of bread for man's use, to comfort and support life. But his dependence thereupon is only fubordinate, and in part: but every word out of the mouth of God is able to give life, temporal and eternal. Not only some of his words, but all: not only taken altogether, but each individually by itself! not only useful, but gives life: yea, man can wholly live by each word written from the mouth of Gop. Man then does live in part upon bread, and the gift is to be received with gratitude; but he can live for ever by faith in the word; not only by his whole bible, but by every individual word written therein. I be made is brought to the

HEREUPON, the devil feems to have lost almost all patience and self possession: became rude, and

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and drew near, and took hold of him, and carried him from that place to Jerusalem, and set bim on a pinnacle of the temple. Probably he tried whether he could frighten him, or oblige him to use refistance, and bodily violence, to escape nout of his hands. Inflead of that, our Lord neither refifted, nor frowned, nor dreaded; but was meek, innocent, and passive; and suffered him to go and do what he would. When he had placed him on the pinnacle, he faid, If thou be the fon of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

As if he would fay, I fee that you are too felfdenying to work a miracle to gratify any inclinations of your own, though they are none but fuch as are natural and innocent: and you feem to be too public spirited to work a miracle in private; but now here is an opportunity of a public nature. Now, if you are the fon of God, nothing can be more proper and pertinent than what I fay. For it will not only prove you to be the person, but it will be considered as your coming down from heaven. Your birth is fo low, and fo much against your advance, and withal wrapped up in fuch obscurity, that hardly a man will

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will be able to trace it out, or have affurance enough to affert it. This miraculous descent from hence down among yonder people below. will render all enquiries after it needless, and so will draw a veil over it, and put it out of mind: the people will flock about you; and within this very hour, you will find yourfelf in the midst of admirers: you will be received as the messiah without speaking one word; for they are ready for fuch an event: you will fee heralds fent forth to proclaim the arrival of great Shilo, according to ancient promises and prophecies: they will affert and pronounce that your coming was worthy the dignity of the person and office of the Saviour; not in a low clandestine manner; but by a descent from heaven in open day, and before many witnesses: the city this day will be full of joy through you; you will be the conversation of every company, and the thought of every individual.

THE language is short, but all these ideas seem to be implied and intended to impress on the occasion. The reply afferted that it was written again, Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God. That is, Thou shalt not call upon God for needless miracles. If there was such a promise of God, this would not be a sober and modest

use of it, but, on the contrary, idle, presumptuous, and wanton. But he that casts himself down from a house, or precipice, has no promise in the book of God to warrant his fafety. The promise cited here from Pfalm xci. is, That a man shall be kept in all his ways, not if he goes aftray into forbidden paths. The tempter is told, that to expect Gon to fave us from the danger, from which we will not fave ourselves; to help us from the hurt that we feek; and to run after danger and jump into it, hoping that God will keep us from it, is not believing, but tempting Gon: is not truffing, but mocking: not honouring God, but degrading him, as the author of idle works, and turning miracles into trifles and amusements.

The tempter being again defeated, discovers growing symptoms of impatience. He takes our Lord now to the top of a mountain, exceeding high, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; Luke says, in a moment of time; and said, all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Which way he did, or could show all this, I shall not enquire. This was atended as one of his miracles; and there is nothing in them worth sinding out. And I should think by the rapidity

with

with which it was done, that he did not intend, nor chuse much examination in the cases. It was begun and overning a momenta He knew that it would not bear looking into, and therefore the more sudden that better Nay, I think that he was afraid that people would ask how he did it, else he would have done it more deliberately, for the subject inself, and his pretended delign in it, required deliberation; but he was afraid.

But here, b think, I can discern the head of the serpent trodden upon, and visibly hurt. He is all violence, haste, and rapidity in every thing. The management is void of that fort of ingenuity, which he as a devil possesses to compass his own ends. There was little or no sense, in supposing that a person who had discovered such self-command, and presence of mind, would fall in with this temptation.

vine worship. The character of a beggar for dicreditable: but to beg to be worshipped and adored with prostration, is in sound and sense too

2. But he offers to pay for it; but he bids too high. To give the whole world, with all its kingdoms and glory, founds odd, lavishing, and fuspicious. A thinking man would say, either he

he fays, by a deed of gift; by whom, when, and how the given came to give fo much, is not told. Possession and power to convey, he says, he had; and was under no limitations; to whomsoever I will, I give it. All shall be thine, if thou wilt fall down before me and worship me.

- very suspicious. The sight was only for a moment. This of itself was enough to prove him an impostor of bas and nour beworked as we stay
- 5. His demand was fooligh and extravagant. It was agreed upon among all wife men that divine worship was due only to him who made the world; and on the other hand, that the devil alone was his competitor herein. The tempter therefore betrayed and exposed himself here, and showed who he was; and then our LORD called him by his proper name.

THE reply affirmed that there was but one being in the universe, that ought to be worshipped, that is God. Meaning that God had alone created every creature; was the sole owner there-

fore, and had a right to the whole of worship and service. As every creature is wholly Goo's, he owes to him all the worship and service that he can render. The tempter is then answered and deseated upon his own principles as stated by himself, without altering one word in the statement, That being in possession of the world by a deed of gift, and being also able and willing to give it to another,

- 1. Proved that he had no right to divine honour, because it was a confession that he had not made it, and consequently was himself a creature.
- 2. Proven that he had been poor, before this gift was bestowed upon him, and upon his giving it all away, as he proposed, would be very poor again. After parting with all his wealth and all his glory, he would have nothing to make him worthy of any fort of honour; much less divine worship.
- 3. PROVED him to be the devil himself, for nobody but him ever did set up this sort of rivalship with the creator. Therefore, get thee behind me Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, closes the combat. That is, thou hast now confessed thyself to be a creature, and there-

fore thyself in debt to thy creator and LORD, for all forts of service and worship: and by asking for this for thyself, hast confessed thyself to be the devil, and therefore not to be heard.

Thus the cause and progress of the temptation. A voice from heaven had declared Jesus to be the fon of God. The devil resolves to try him. He comes with craft, with stratagem, false reasoning, affected patience, pretended meekness; and then to violence, to rage, to rapidity, to rapacity, and blasphemy: every thing is tried, moderate and extravagant; foothing and infulting, winning and worrying, to shake and pump out what was within: but with all he could do, he could get nothing from him by which he could know whether he was, or was not, the fon of God; or whether he was confident or diffident; in doubt or affurance. In a word, he was obliged to leave him as he found him. Nothing could he pump out that amounted to a confession or denial; nor could he read or trace in his face. to his own fatisfaction, either divinity or humanity, but an unfathomable countenance that surpassed all interpretation.

In this last struggle, as I said above, the devil acts below himself. This temptation is not conducted with that accomplishment and ability which distinguishes

distinguishes him as a devil. For to propose things fo extravagant and improbable, to a person who had been fo unimpressed by the foregoing, does nor discover management. Not but that the enemy of Gob, as an evil doer is great and formidable but defeats and vexation had wounded, and deprived him of all his patience and prefence: of mind. Confidering him as one in whom pride and ambition, with every other luft, are in all their power and original force, what must he have felt! Divinity and humanity in the same face had looked at him so as to bewilder him. All was odd; all was unintelligible! Weither could be defined and traced with any certainty; nor could any certain inferences be drawn. The features and looks of his antagonist is engraved upon his imagination, and recollection runs a thousand daggers through his heart. His infide is torn and racked with spleen and anguish, and his head diffracted with doubts and fuspicions. The great chief in all mischief, who came victorious from paradife, is now ashamed to show himself. He is baffled and cannot fo much as with certainty tell his confederates, who waited for the iffue of the combat, who, or what, his antagonist was.

On the other hand, with the angels it was a high day. As foon as the combatants parted, they entered

entered and ministered to their Gon and LORD. and hailed him. And here I must beg leave to think that they went into heaven. What to do? to keep a holy day: to hold a feast of joy, I was going to fay, for feven days. They went up to vent their passions and ease their minds: that they might fay, LORD JESUS to one another as loud as ever they could ! To cry out with all their heart and strength, and tongue and voice, Jesus Jehovah! They fpeak, they fing, they burit out, Appollyon is defeated! the head of the serpent is wounded the first public act of human redemption is finished! They fay to one another, Immanuel! They pronounce Lord Jesus, till the heavens do hake, and the elements are convulled! The triumph, the cries, the shouts, the harps, and the trumpets rear the found, hofannah, hallelujah to the fon of David. Thou fon of David, fon of Abraham, fon of Adam, fon of Gop! Thou holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of thy glory! who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!-Thus Jesus vanquished the devil for us, unfullied, unstained, and unshaken; and proved himself to be God and not man. Can any one here trace the natural infirmities of a fallen man? Can any one fail to fee the frailty and infirmity

infirmity of the devil? I can fee the traces and forms, and hear the voice of a creature in the devil in all he does and fays. I can fee Job when tried, a weak and fallible man. But in Jesus, I can fee and hear nothing but infathomable divinity, though in a certain fense, in difguise. Let the name of Jesus be adored as God over all, bleffed for ever, amen.

4. WE view him under infults. He had many, but I shall view him under only one of them. and observe, whether his conduct appears to the eve, or ear of reason, to be that of Gop or man. The inflance referred to, is recorded in Matthew the eighth chapter, Mark the fifth, and Luke the eighth. He passed the seas and landed among the Gadarenes: he is met by two men under the power of a gang of devils: one is much worse than the other, and is therefore by two of the evangelists mentioned as alone: fetters and chains were no impediments to his ravings: day and night he equally roams, and foreads universal panic. The naked spectre is to and fro, hither and thither, rampant as a lion, and terrible as death: the fight shocks, the yelling and roaring voice impresses the mind with fear: lives are in danger: the roads are deferted: and the country in terror. Jesus cures him:

he croffed the fea on purpose to deliver the man from his misery, and free the country from its fears: he made him before their eyes the picture of decency, modesty, innocency, and good sense. He did it without the influence of interest or the voice of importunity.

THE devils with clamour defire leave to enter into a great herd of fwine, hard by: it is granted: they enter, and the fwinerun raving mad over a precipice into the fea: by the invisible power of IESUS, the whole herd, though inspired and hurried with infernal rage, are held together, and made to agree to purfue one straight course and drown themselves every one, without tearing or touching one creature in their way. These are two great miracles, in both which, the devils were not only over-ruled, but evidently disappointed: for I can scarce believe, that they intended or wished to drown the swine. They defired leave to inspire them, but perhaps in their fright forgot to ask leave to direct their motions after. But here are two miracles which I shall take notice of by and by.

But in this Jesus is charged with injury and injustice. This has been advanced by Deists, who say, that he sent the devils into the swine, which in consequence were lost to the owners.

He has no need of me tondefend his character, either here or elsewhere. But yet I speak in his behalf, to defend my own understanding in adoring him, without which he swill not accept of the; for ignorance is not in repute with him. II will therefore prove that this action is both just and good.

T. Just Gop was in a special manner the own er of the dland of Canaan. It was Immanuel's own land: he granted it to Ifrael as their inheritance upon Iconditions: the condition was that they would live there according to his laws; and in case of disobedience he was to punish them with losses, expulsion, or death, as the matter deserved. They accepted of it upon these terms, and said, in all things that the LORD our God shall speak unto us, we will obey, and do them. In these laws, the use of the swine was to them expressly denied; with this forbidden flock, they had yet filled the country, and therein had established an open trade. Immanuel, the real owner of the land was now personally present, an eve witness of their contempt of law and justice. Had he therefore ordered the devils to feize and destroy all the creatures of the kind in the country, it would have been frict justice in him in every point of view. sraw someopeloop of forw

But this is deviating from my direct defign, which is a chain of arguments against unitarianism; yet against deism I will further add,

2. THAT this action was not only just, but also good. To make little or nothing of the preservation of fwine, when the idea came in contact with that of the preservation of man, is excellently good and greatly to be admired. The petition was, if we are cast out of the man, suffer us to enter into the swine. And for him to carry himself so as to signify, that if the man was fafe, he cared but little what came of the fwine, was altogether fuitable to the difference between the two creatures in the scale of being. And the advantages to the man, and his friends, and to the whole country at large, were so great, that the loss to the owners ought not to be admitted as an idea of weight. Since the man and the country were freed from fuch unsupportable evils, to be, and appear to be, wholly indifferent about the swine, was treating human nature with honour, and therefore the action is great and good.

IF any one should say, that I answer a Deist as if he was a believer, I say so too; his cavil will admit of no other. He says that the scripture is a lie; that JESUS was an impostor; and that his sending the devils into the swine was

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unjust. Now his affirming the dishonesty of the deed, is a confession of faith; to wit, that Jesus did turn the devils out of the man, and fent them into the fwine; and that confequently they could neither flay, nor go, any where, but by his permission. Therefore, he admits of the truth of the fact, and the credibility of the book that relates it; and, either renouncing or forgetting his own creed, he commences a believer in the omnipotence of Jesus, and the truth of the scripture. But he fays, he believes the scripture in this, though not in every thing. This brings to my mind a story of Judge Jefferies, concerning a man, who obstinately pleading guilty, was acquitted by the jury because they all knew him to be a common liar, whose word was not to be taken in any case, much less where life and death were concerned. And as the Deifts do reckon the scripture a common liar, in order to be confident with themselves, they should have treated the case in a manner something similar to the above jury.

But here I leave the Deifts, and turn myfelf toward their near kinsmen, the unitarians. I consider therefore where, in this event, Jesus appears to be a son, and not a common servant; to be God and not man. This is evident,

I. In his fetting out. He went without any intimation of a commission. This no common fervant of God would dare do: not in any case. much less in so high and enterprizing an affair as this. He was not bid to go: he did not afk leave: he did not pray, either for help or direction. He did not, for the history leads the mind to no fuch ideas; but on the contrary, that he carried himself on the occasion as a Sovereign, who had the fole direction of his own actions. It is said, Luke viii. 22. That upon a certain day, he went into a ship with his disciples and faid, let us go over unto the other fide. The language does not found like that of common fervants, nor of any fervant at all. Peter, when fent to Cornelius, faid, that God bade him go, with the men who accompanied him, nothing doubting. And this was the common rule of acting and speaking with all the servants of Gop. But Jesus did not tell the disciples, Gon bade me go to the other fide and take you with me. Let us pass over, says he, as a sovereign who went at pleasure, and governed his own actions, and had the disposal of those who were with him.

In their progress across the sea, a storm arose: the conslict of the elements is violent, and I 2 presents

presents a scene, awful and tremendous. The disciples, though seafaring men, give up all hope, and expect nothing but immediate death. He was afleep: in dread and terror they awake him. and blame him much as one that cared not what became of himself or others. He awoke and rose: and reproving and upbraiding them with timidity and unbelief, he spoke these two words to the wind and fea, Peace-be still,-and there was a great calm. Now the impression made upon those who heard, and faw the effect, was this, that the elements in the midst of all their violence had evidently and instantly obeyed his word. This was the certain idea impressed upon their minds by what they heard and faw. For they marvelled exceedingly and faid, What manner of man is this! For he commandeth, and even the winds and fea obey him! He fo conducted it as to make it appear to those who were present, that the elements had obeyed, not another, but himself: not any power, not any authority under which he acted, or to which he had appealed; but his own. The power of his own word is held out as the fole cause to which the miracle is to be ascribed. He rebuked and chid the wind and fea, as a master and independent fovereign who demanded obedience, and it was rendered PALSING.

rendered accordingly forthwith. He made it appear, that he was the Lord and fovereign of nature, and had all the elements in subjection to him: the disciples took it in that light, and were therefore confounded, because they knew him not at the time. Had he conducted the miracle as a prophet, or any other common servant of God, they would not have said, What manner of man is this; for there had been often such men before, whom the elements had obeyed when they spake in the name of God. But this was done so make it appear that the wind and sea had obeyed him himself; and so as to make him appear a manner of man altogether above their ideas.

It is plain here, therefore, that our Lord was not so careful to guard people against high thoughts of him as the unitarians would have us believe. For if he did, he would have used another name to do what he did; and when he heard the disciples muttering and whispering such things to each other, he would have told them not to ascribe it to him, but to God, by whose help and power he had done it. When the cripple at the gate of the temple was healed, and the people stared and wondered and gazed, Peter answered and said, though they had said nothing,

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Why do you look so earnestly on us, as though we, by our own power or holiness, had made this man to walk? The people looked as if they were forming and cherishing some extravagant ideas of Peter and John, who had done fuch a miracle. Then Peter, like a faithful fervant, and an honest man, disclaimed the power and holiness they fancied to be in them, and ascribed the miracle to Gop, and directed them to do the same. But lesus did no such thing. when the people were amazed, and faid, What manner of man is this! He speaks, and winds and feas obey him! Yea, he evidently conducted the affair so as to provoke high ideas; and then left them to go on to think of him as high as they would, as a thing in which it was impossible to exceed. He impressed the mind with the idea of omnipotence, and left them in it, bewildered and amazed: for at the time they knew not that absolute power was an attribute of humanity; and therefore were bewildered and confounded. But foon after, they found and published what manner of man he was: omnipotent and divine, with whom all things are possible, and to whom all things are known, in heaven and earth.

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FURTHER, when he landed, he preserved a fuperiority of conduct which diftinguishes him from all his father's fervants. A fervant would have told who he was; who fent him; and why he came; but he did nothing of the kind. In a word, he never told the disciples the business before they went off, or that he had orders to take them along: wrought the miracle by his own word, without confessing helps or obligations: he landed where he pleased: he acquainted none with his name, nor confulted with any about his bufiness there, though it was very important and interesting to the country. In all this he conducted himself as a sovereign above all, the LORD of his own concerns, and accountable to none for what he did.

II. The divinity appears in the cure of the man. There were two, but I shall speak only of one, who is more noted than the other. The divinity is visible here many ways. It is so in the effect which his presence produced in the place. The distant sight of him so impressed and overawed the demoniac, that he instantly ran and worshipped him. He fell down prostrate at his seet; he cried out with a loud voice: said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God, most high? Art thou come to torment

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me?

me? I befeech thee, I adjure thee by Gon, that thou torment me not. This man, the devil had made, as it were, his Sampson: was more fierce than a tyger, and rampant than a lion. Lions are tamed, he could not be tamed by any man or means: lions are bound and confined, he could not, either by fetters or chains: both had been frequently tried, but in vain. He was the terror and torment of town and country where he came, and all men fled at the fight to fave their lives. But Jesus appears: the distant fight overwhelms: he knows who he is, and dreadfully feels. He made all hafte, he ran, he humbled himself and adored him: and prostrate in the dust at his feet, confessed three things, crying out with a very loud voice. First, that he was his fuperior, in every point of view. What have I to do with thee? Nothing: I submit to be nothing. I was firong till I faw thee, and had to do with every man, either to terrify, or tear him to pieces. I do not mean to shew what I can do before thee: all the power or fierceness I can exert, to thee are nothing. Wherever I go, I am dreaded: whatever road I take, town or country, all men retire and leave their places: I terrify, I drive away the inhabitants, and clear the neighbourhood where I enter. I tear to pieces all the bands and means to confine me: I triumph over all the strength and fortitude of man: and treat with contempt all the means used to tame me. To them I am awful; to thee despicable: to them formidable; to thee feeble: to them irrefiftible and unmanagable; but to thee, am nothing. I ceafe to act: I will not move hand or foot: I will not look up in thy face; nor dare attempt it. I faw thy face, and for the first time faw my superior: and here I hold the dust at thy feet to confess before thee that I am nothing. What has feebleness to do in the face of power? Nothing, but to be feeble and humble, and lie in the dust: nothing, but to fear and stand in awe, and be quiet. Do not expect any thing then from me, but a confession that thou art the first that ever tamed and overawed me into humility and subjection; and, lo, I bow, I hide my face, I fink down to the ground beneath thy looks. Secondly, he confessed that he knew him by name, and by nature. By name, Jesus: Jah, the Saviour. Whether he understood all he faid or not, it means Jah, the mighty Saviour, born into the world to fave and deliver it. By nature, fon of God most high: by nature, therefore, God on high: over all bleffed for ever: mighty,

mighty, holy, irrefiftible, and altogether adorable. Herein, whether he understood what he faid, or understood not, he confesses him to be the only begotten of the father: creator of heaven and earth: heir of all things: the amen, that gave and confirmed the existence and order of univerfal nature: and, sealed all the decrees and promifes of God. And, Thirdly, he owns that his looks and words were irrefiftible. Says he. Art thou come hither to torment me before the time? I befeech thee, I adjure thee, by Gop. that thou torment me not. As if he had faid, I was tormented of men, but never yielded nor failed in the least degree under their hands: never asked them to forbear: tormented myself in contempt and defiance, and never thought it insupportable: and invited and provoked all that could be done of the kind. But the moment I faw thee, I fell, I funk beneath thy look. O great and awful fuperior, what hast thou done! What arrows are these that have run me through! What terrors these that have disabled me! From what have they derived their active force to torment! Strange! Where am I? What hand has laid itself on my feelings! What is this internal violence! What convulsions and what horrors are thefe! Art thou come hither

make bad worse? to make hell begin and burst, and burn within me before I am there? At death I expected it: but is it not thus come before the time? Art thou come to create it within me on earth? I feel torments, I feel: I cease: I will no more defy. Desist, desist, I beseech thee. I did not know what torment meant before, I now do, and deprecate. Let me crave, let me swear thee, O take an oath that thou wilt forbear, for thou art above me. To this effect the prayer of the tamed and humbled demoniac; who confessed and adored, not then in piety, but overawed in dread and terror.

DIVINITY is visible in the cure by the means used to effect it. It was the word of Jesus: his alone, without adding or using any other. He said, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit; which was speaking with unlimited command and authority. This can be no other than the losty stile of a sovereign, who meant to create high thoughts of himself; and to provoke people to adore him: and, as such, it appears wise and worthy; and altogether sit to impress the mind. But for any one to speak thus in order to humble himself, and make people think little of him, would be strange. For illustration sake, suppose the unitarian saviour to be the per-

fon: suppose also that you were there and heard him. Then ask him, Why do you work this miracle, and do these great and mighty things in your own name, without using the name, or acknowledging the help of God? and that he should say, I do it to make myself look little, and guard you effectually against high thoughts of me, which will be the great sin and idolatry of the world! How absurd! But if Jesus intended to guard us against the sin and idolatry of thinking little of him: if he meant to provoke high and great ideas of himself, and induce us to pay him divine homage; nothing could be more pertinent. So much for the means and method.

AND as to the cure itself, it is declarative of divine efficacy. For it was soon and perfectly done. The devils departed, and the man was delivered at the word out of his mouth. Thereupon, the common modesty and decency of human nature returned: he selt the need of clothes, and had them, and was clothed: he could now no more bear them off, than he could a sew minutes ago bear them on. He sat at the seet of Jesus; harmless and humble; calm and sedate. Rage and violence have lest him: his attitude is lowly: his looks are mild and patient. Leizure and self possession are apparent. Reason also is returned

returned: has feated itself in the features, and made itself visible in the cast of the eyes. All that beheld him could see that he was in his right mind, as certainly as they could see that he sat and was clothed. That reason governed his mind, was as visible as the garments that covered his body; and every thing proved that the cure was complete and perfect in the inward and in the outward man.

I THINK it not altogether out of the way to mention another circumstance here that carries an air of greatness and superiority. That is, that all this was done, without calling or consulting friends and relatives of any description. In general he acted otherwise. But on this, and some other occasions, he carried himself as the great LORD of the world, who had a right to dispose of its inhabitants according to his own will; and changed their conditions, from this to that, as feemed good in his fight. Strictly speaking, none but himself has any right, or interest in men or things. It became him therefore, at times, to shew that he was accountable to none in any of his great actions, any farther than as a matter of condescension. And it is this line of conduct he observes in all this transaction throughout: he conducted a scene big with solemn and moving particulars, without a word by way of confultation with friends, either before or at the time.

the wind and sea, and subdued their violence was wonderful; but with that, which subdued the rage of this man, and converted it into innocency and meekness, is not to be compared. How marvellous the appearance! What was the calm at sea, compared with the peace and quiet of this man, and the harmless ease and serenity of his looks! What a great, what a pleasing wonder! The storm quieted upon the sea was a wonder, but that upon the land, a greater; a far greater display of divine energy and goodness. What are storms of wind, to storms of rage and violence from hell! and what is a calm sea, to a calm man, brought to possess peace of mind and an easy conscience!

III. The divinity of Jesus appears in the terror and subjection of the devils. Their head spoke in the man, and acted in all his actions. All that was said and done before they were ordered to depart, was said and done by the man and the devils conjointly. Therefore Matthew says, They cried out; and Mark and Luke say, He cried out. That is, the man, and the devils, acted and spoke in each other. All therefore,

that the man faid and did, they also said and did. Consequently they, with compulsion, dread, and terror, fell down to adore the LORD JESUS; and in the dust confessed him to be the son of God, with whom they had nothing to do: they own him an absolute superior, the energy of whose anger they could not refift; and whose power to torment, was beyond their power to bear. They grant him his titles, worship, glory, descent, sovereignty, power; any thing and every thing, if he would but withdraw the additional torment now laid upon them, and fuspend it till the time to receive it in full was come. By all importunity and by all means they ask him to defift; and beg for a little mitigation for a time. The chief cries out aloud, that with Jesus he had nothing to do. Salvation he knew he had no interest in: and to attempt a contest, was not only vain, but even dreadful. With others he had fomething to do, being able to find in every man, even the best, something or other to his purpose to annoy and ensnare him: something to be impressed and to be wrought upon, is to be found in all that I have tried but thee: I have found them all to be mere men, finite and fallible, whom I either take in, or at least make them discover and betray their weakness.

THE devil had lately handled JESUS all manner of ways, and found nothing to his own advantage: nothing by which he could be drawn
or driven to fin: nothing to cause a slip or forget; or cause a word or deed to be misplaced.
Another series of temptations, therefore, he would
not manage against him: what had been urged
had cost him enough; and instead of proving that
he was not the son of God, had fully proved
that he was. Therefore he cries out, that he
was the son of God most high. This confession
is nothing but compulsion, and the dread he had
of another contest.

THE subjection and abasement of the devils is further visible in their being obliged to tell their name. This was the name of the man in whom they resided, and that was, Legion. This was a military term of the Romans. It is said by some to be two, by others three, sour, and so on to seven thousand soldiers. It might be ten, for any thing we know: all that is certain is, that it was a great number of men. This appears, therefore, to be a matter of infernal majesty and boast; that the devil had a mighty champion, aided by a legion of chosen devils from hell, and who could stand before him? there he is, attack him if you dare: bind him if you can:

can? Our LORD therefore asked him his name: Legion, favs he. O shame! Here is the devil with his champion and formidable legion screaming out; cringing in dust and dirt, to crave a little abatement of their terror and torment! Here is the flower of the infernal forces; here are the proud and boasting chiefs of the powers of darkness, crawling on the ground at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth, to beg that he would spare them, if it were but for a little while! This pompous name the devil had probably given to his mighty hero by inspiring the man, or the people, or both, to call him fo; and now, alas, is obliged to confess it to his shame. The title had been used by the man and the devils, as a matter of triumph and infult, that he was formidable; numerous in co-agents; and infernally grand and irrefiftible: who could look him in the face? who could open his mouth, or stand where he appeared? But now, alas! in dust and shame! down upon the ground at the fight of Jesus, adoring and confessing his power, glory, and divinity! It is faid, that to the name JESUS, things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth; celestials, terrestrials and infernals, as the words are, should bow the knee, to the glory of God the father; and here is one in-K ftance

stance, as a specimen. Here is abasement and humiliation, to lie down in shame and fear after cruel and infulting pomp and arrogance! He fervilely craves, however, some indulgences. First. that our LORD would not order them out of the country; that is, that they might remain there with liberty to enter into others, where they could, or should. Hereby he confesses that Tesus had the fole disposal of the country and every thing in it: and that no person could stay in, or be turned out of it, but as he pleased. They befought him much; but it was not granted. They were obliged to quit the country and relinquish that power by which they deluded and blinded the minds of the people. And therefore, when our LORD returned there in a short time after, they acted in general like reasonable creatures. A second petition was, that he would not order them into the deep; into the abyss; that is, of hell. He would wish, that he, and his chosen troops, may not now be sent there, with defeat and shame, after so much triumph and infult, and carrying all before them: this was not granted. Hereby he confesses that the power to stay out of hell; to fend, to bind, and to punish there, is in the hand of JESUS: and that he, and his confederates, even there; have

have no power at all. He begs therefore, that he would not; for if he did, go they must; but if he did not, no one else could fend them. They have nothing from him yet but forbidding filence: they are at a loss: they know not what to ask next. They fee a great herd of fwine: they know the fight to be an offence: they refolve in their extremity to improve that, in order to obtain some fort of terms, and therefore, Thirdly, they beg leave to enter into the fwine. One only it feems was spokesman in the other petitions; but here they all joined. Says Mark, All the devils belought him. This is some fort of a capitulation; but the terms are low indeed. And yet the whole legion is remarkably earnest. All united, to fignify the most earnest and unanimous importunity. They feem to dread going out without any terms at all; and therefore all the devils are, as it were, upon their knees, praying, and craving, and begging, that he would grant; O grant them this petition; fo much the object of their wish, and which they all have so much at heart.

AND JESUS gave them leave: Mark fays, forthwith. Forthwith directs me to fomething particular in the manner of his doing it. He granted it foon: they are bending, and preparing

paring to repeat and urge the plea; but he fuddenly faid, go. Not only he granted it foon, but I am led to think that his countenance changed; that with an appearance of surprize and placid ease upon his features, he said, go. That is, you had no need of this exertion; one, with one word, would have done. Asking not to be tormented, and not to be ordered out of the country, and fent into hell with defeats and disgrace, were ideas of some worth and weight; but for angels to beg fo hard the privilege of entering into fwine, is very condescending indeed! Such uncommon humility ought not to be flighted wholly, and therefore I must take the blame upon myself and fay, go! Something this way is obliquely hinted at.

AND having obtained permission they entered into the swine, in number about two thousand. Whether the devils in number were equal, more; or less, I will not take upon me to say. Be that as it will, the unitarians then set out one way, and all at once in a manner suitable to the occasion. They were at their seed; and probably, the drovers were just going with them to sea for exportation; but they saved them the trouble and expence of passage: they ran thither themselves; and the Evangelists who saw them,

fay, that it was with very great violence. This is the infernal legion; this is the chosen army of hell. They would not attempt, or pretend to any thing memorable by way of resistance upon that day; but they conducted a flight, which for speed, rapidity, and other circumstances, is worthy of a place in history. The defeat and overthrow of the devil, and thereby the divinity of Jesus were rendered visible. They knew not what would become of them; they confess they dare not move without his leave; but they are in haste and will embrace any means, the quickest and shortest, to get out of his sight.

IV. THE divinity of JESUS appears, in his disposing of the swine as a sovereign: he acts above the owners: he pays no damage: he makes no apology for his conduct. The devils asked his leave, knowing his power to dispose of them was unquestionable. It might be feared the drovers would break by it. If fo, they must compound, and pay as far as they can. here will hold himself accountable to none: indebted to none: places himfelf on high; fon of God most high! great and universal creditor, to whom men are indebted for life and breath and all things. Let the potsherds of the earth, creditors and debtors balance their accounts, and K 3 fettle

fettle their affairs as well as they can; but they must not call upon him. He gives here a specimen of his absolute power over human property, to shift it from hand to hand; to take from one and give to another; to diminish or encrease; to save or destroy; to make a man rich or poor: a bankrupt or a beggar, at the pleasure of his own will. It had been afferted by John Baptist, and by our Lord, either then, or soon after, that the father had delivered all things into the hands of the son, and had committed all judg, ment to him. But some visible proofs were necessary to impress it upon the mind: and here we have a proper proof and specimen of it.

Ir the unitarian Saviour had been the person, it can hardly be denied, that the action would have been unwarrantable and dishonest: he ought to have said, that they had asked for what he had no right to dispose of. And I think that the unitarians ought to be on their guard, lest the heirs and assignees of the drovers should come upon them for principal and arrears of interest. But Mr. Evanson, that beautiful unitarian harmonizer, has found that this story is forged. He begins his book on the Dissonance of the four Evangelists, something to this effect. That all men alike should be able to judge what is real christianity

christianity; and clearly distinguish what is true from what is false. They ought therefore to have a plain and popular rule to guide them with ease and certainty in judging what is to be received as true, and what to be rejected as fourious: this is given positively in the present book: this will enable every person to know where the history in the Evangelists is true, and where it is otherwise. And that is, the elegance or inelegance of the Greek words and phrases used by the writer. Where the Greek is correct and elegant, there it is true: where it is inelegant and yulgar, there it is false, reject it. By this Mr. Evanson has found Matthew, Mark. John, and almost all the new testament to be false: Luke is true for the most part. And here is a rule by which all ploughmen and old women shall be able to judge and discern without danger of erring! But to return from this digression-The swine are all lost in the sea, and the devils fled, and were obliged thereby to publish their terror and defeat to all the world.

THIS affair took place foon after the temptation in the wilderness: in that, the devil was the affailant, and Jesus acted on the defence: made no attack at all, and yet dreadfully impressed and hurt his enemy. Our LORD now

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pursues and is an affailant; at least in some degree; and the devil apprehended it so. The moment therefore, that that face came in sight which had so unsupportably and irrecoverably impressed itself upon his imagination, he screamed out that he was undone. For if acting on the desensive only had been attended with such woeful effects, what energy must attend his attacks! Neither resistance nor slight without leave would do. He runs therefore: he cries: he declines a dispute: he sunk down and begged that he would not go on in anger: it is enough, and more.

Taking this as the continuation of the affair of the wilderness, it stands thus. The devil had then the assurance to affert that he had a fort of right to try him fairly, that it might be known who, and what he was: whether he was what he pretended, or an impostor: then he had business to do with him, and an affair of moment to be settled. He had then to do with him; held up a stone to be made bread, &c. Now he runs, and declares aloud that he had nothing of the kind to do, and would never presume again. He had also the assurance to say, again and again, If thou be the son of God; now, therefore, he makes haste and declares, and pronounces him to be Jesus, the son of

Gop most high. That is to fay, Take it, take it, I give up and heartily and publicly recall those ifs, and will never prefume to pronounce them any more. He had the affurance to try by infults, fears, and torments, to oblige him to fav. that he was not the fon of GoD; now therefore by new impressions of terror and torments from his presence, he is compelled to proclaim him fon of God most high. He had then said that the whole world was his, either to possess or give away; now he is obliged to confess that he had neither right nor power, fo much as to flay in any corner of the earth, without leave from Jesus. And whereas he had faid, that all the riches, and crowns, and glory of kingdoms were his own, and offered them all to Jesus, if he would fall down and worship him; he is now obliged to confess that all was an impudent lie: so far from it, that he had not fo much as a fwine at his disposal, to take, or touch, unless Jesus granted leave. And here ended the combat begun in the wilderness.

V. THE divinity of JESUS appears in his quitting the land of Gad: and here it appears chiefly. After he had done so much good: after his godhead, his power, his glory, his majesty, and sovereignty had been proclaimed by enemies,

in dust and fear, the inhabitants united to beg that he would leave the country and quit all their coasts. He did so: he re-entered the ship at their bidding! Driving away devils: binding, taming, or tormenting them, to him is nothing: curing the difeafed, working miracles, and creating worlds, are works that cost him nothing, and are therefore in a certain fense small; but to bear with fuch a compound of ignorance and rude ingratitude, is great indeed! and a miracle of miracles! What wonders, O what wonders are here! They bid him, and he goes; they pray, and he answers it; they are earnest, and he is yielding; as yielding as they were earnest. They offer no reason, and he requires none: not a word of thanks from them, not a word of blame from him: not a word of apology for their conduct, nor of censure from him for the omission. O rude ignorance! infulting affurance! Wouldst thou be fomething greater than majesty? wouldst thou be fomething stronger than omnipotence? Wilt thou turn health and peace out of thy way! Wilt thou turn Gop out of thy country! Yes, the Gaderenes all prayed, extempore, that God would quit their country.

O Jesus, I will remember thee, long remember thee from the land of Gad: in meek majefty; majesty; in innocent energy; in harmless omnipotence; in mild and patient glory, I will remember thee from the land of Gad, and will adore.

5. WE shall view JESUS in snares. I mean fuch as were invented by his enemies, in order to have him in their power. There are two, which they particularly managed for this end. One was about the tribute paid to Cæfar, and the other about the woman taken in adultery. The first is mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke; and the other by John only. That about the tribute, as recorded by the three historians, will read thus, " The Pharifees held a council, " how they might entangle him in his talk be-" fore the people, and take hold of his words, 55 in order to deliver him to the governor. And " they fent forth spies, certain disciples of the " Pharifees and the Herodians, who should feign " themselves just men: they watched him: they " came to him, and faid, Master, we know that " thou art true: thou speakest and teachest rightly: " thou carest not for man: thou acceptest the " person of no man, but teachest the way of "Gop in truth, Tell us therefore what thou " thinkest, Is it lawful for us to give tribute to " Cæfar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not " give?

"give? But Jesus, knowing their wickedness and hypocrify, said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me a penny of the tribute money, that I may look at it: they brought it: he saith, whose is this image and superscription? They say, Cæsar's, He saith, render therefore to Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's, and to God, the things which are God's. And they marvelled at him, and held their peace, and left him."

THIS is the fnare; and it was invented and managed by two parties, who violently opposed each other; but against our LORD both agreed to lay aside their quarrel, and for the present to unite. The Pharifees rigidly opposed the tax, as against the will and law of Gop, and the honour and liberty of Ifraelites. They were in bondage, they faid, to no man, being the feed of Abraham, and the children of Gop. The Herodians, a party probably formed by Herod the great in favour of Augustus Cæsar, who remained ever after subservient to the emperor, were for the tax, as lawful, though the emperor was a pagan. These could, and doubtless did plead precedents in the case, as that of Nebucadnezzar, and other foreigners and pagans, to whom God had ordered the Israelites to be in subjection.

Both parties had framed their disputed points into a doctrine, or system: supported it by arguments and reasoning: had on both sides orators, disputants and critics of abilities to affert and defend the cause; whose eloquence had impressed and proselyted almost the whole nation to be active for, and against, in the affair.

WHOEVER declared in favour of the tax as lawful, was by the Pharifees declared an enemy to Gon and Ifrael: whoever was against it, was by the Herodians declared an enemy to Cæfar. If our LORD then faid, that the tax was lawful, they meant to condemn him at the Jewish court, civil and ecclefiaftic, as an enemy to God and Ifrael, and therefore could not be the Meffiah, the fon of Gop; and ought to be put to death as a blasphemer for pretending to it. And if he faid the tax was not lawful, and forbad payment, which they chiefly aimed at, they would deliver him to Pilate as an enemy to Cæsar. Say what he would therefore, they thought they should, and must have him in their power. But before I enter upon the subject, I must premise,

First, that these two parties had injured the public mind exceedingly: were influenced on both fides by pride, lucre, and malice, and nothing better.

And as they were themselves governed by these principles,

principles, they could communicate no better. where they made impressions on the mind. And as they had univerfally prevailed, and profelyted the people to the one fide or the other, the effects produced were very bad. The disciples were impressed, some one way and some the other. Therefore our LORD delivered folemn cautions and warnings on the fubject. Mark viii, 15. And he charged them, faying, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharifees, and of the leaven of Herod. That is, as explained after, the doctrine of the Pharifees and the doctrine of Herod. This was propagated by their disciples, who compaffed fea and land to make a profelyte; and when made, he was twofold more a child of hell than themselves. For those orators employed on both fides, inspired their proselytes with all the venom and violence of faction and party rage; and by this means divided the nation into two hoffile parties, ever on the watch to disoblige and mortify each other. These doctrines infected, and foured, and swelled the mind, and filled the heart with every evil passion. And when it had taken full effect in the mind, it was almost as impossible to get it out, as it would be to extract leaven from the dough, after it has incorporated itself with the whole mass. Therefore says he, take

take heed, and beware of it equally on both fides. I premise further, that the mind of JESUS CHRIST, relative to taxation in general was unknown to friends and foes. This appears by Mat. xvii. 24, The collectors of Capernaum asked Peter, whether their master paid tribute? Peter said he did. They did not know, and it is plain, that either they would not, or they could not ask him the question. They take Peter when alone, and do not make a demand by him, but only ask the question. This was a tax in value about tifteen pence, which every Israelite was to pay yearly towards the service of the temple; and When Peter came was of divine appointment. in, he prevented his delivering the meffage to alk for the money, by asking him, Simon, what thinkest thou? of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute or custom, of their own children, or of strangers, meaning subjects? Peter said, of strangers. Then, fays he, are the children free. Yet, lest we offend them, go to the fea: take the fish that first cometh up; open his mouth, and thou shalt find a piece of money: give that for thee and me. That is, I being the king's fon am free by the privilege of all royal families: but as thou hast inadvertently spoken and promifed, go and get the money, not from me;

nor from any man, for that would be borrowing; but go and receive it from a fifth out of the fea, to prevent their anger at the disappointment. Jesus then, rather than pay the tax, wrought a miracle; because it would degrade his sonship. The king's fon owes love, reverence, and filial obedience to the father; but no tax. In refuling to pay it, he honoured himself as the king's son: and thereby honoured his father as the king of heaven and earth. To evade it was a piece of honour, therefore, which he owed to his father, as well as to himself. Expositors say, he refused to pay it, as king David's fon. But that is a mistake; for neither David, nor any other of the kings of Israel were free from this tax: they, and their royal families were tributaries here. This was a tax paid to the king of kings. Being the fon of any fovereign on earth, would not therefore have freed him from this. For themfelves and families were equally included, and bound with their subjects under this law. Jesus could not pay even this tax without dishonouring himself, and staining the glory of his sonship; for he was the fon of the king who levied it. Who paid it then, at that time? A fish came out of the sea; not to clear the debt of Jesus, for he was free, but to prevent the offence, owing

to Peter's mistake. No law, no reason, no principle of justice could call upon him to pay it, because he was the son of God, the king of kings: and nothing could exempt him from this tax, but his being the son of God, the supreme being, to whom all the sovereigns of the earth, together with their sons, are subjects.

Bur here he was not understood; and his mind and thoughts on the fubject were wholly unknown. I am inclined to think from this place, and from other confiderations, especially the fnare laid for him, that no collector would chuse to ask him any thing about it. They had no doubt tried him; and were always fent off without any thing for their masters; but never without fomething for themselves, for which they had at last rather go without the money than venture to ask for it. This great and extraordinary caution, probably made his enemies conclude, that if his mind on this subject could be drawn out of him, it would be fomething greatly to his difadvantage. The point in hand, therefore, is to watch him in a fituation proper for the purpofe, and fend men that knew how to handle the fubiect, to compel him to tell his mind and come to the light. This was the fnare, to have him fo fituated, and fo properly addressed, that he could L

extricate himself from the difficulty. The collectors had him only in corners, and were not men of address. They will now have him in a proper place, and talked to by men who knew how to place their words. This much I thought expedient to premise. Now let us turn to the subject, and see where the divinity appears in it. This is plain in the superior, unembarrassed, and disentangled state of mind, with which he conducted, and freed himself from the snare. To come to particulars, the divinity is apparent,

- I. In the refistance and repulse with which he treated their flattery.
 - 2. In the answer given to their question.
 - 3. In the filence of his antagonists.

First, their flattery was relifted in a manner that displayed divinity, and distinguished him from weak mortals. This was an address calculated to make its way to the feelings, previous to their naming the question. They said, Master, we know thee to be true: speakest and teachest rightly: earest not for man: acceptest the person of no man, but teachest the way of God in truth. I have for many years thought this the finest piece of slattery ever worded. The stile is not bombast and slourishing: not pompous and extravagant;

travagant; for they knew that would not fuit the person, nor the occasion: it is grave, it is nervous, it is concife, refembling that of infoiration: it gives the most perfect character of a public teacher that words can define: describes that of lesus Christ as truly and accurately as Gop himself would have done. Nothing more fair, nothing could be feemingly more taking and winning. It was presented before asfembled multitudes, with all descriptions of friends and foes, which added many ideas of force. It was delivered by men of appearance and respectability: men who knew where to place their words, and how to pronounce them: and, withal, men not only meek and lowly enough to receive instruction, but pious enough to feek it and receive it publicly.

An address so full of praise, and sounded so high with honour, would have articulated itself agreeably; would have tuned itself in the ears of a weak mortal so delightfully, that it would have been hard for him to guard his heart and feelings: would have engraved itself on his mind, and would have sunk him down into placidity and good nature, where he ought to be stern. But Jesus by it is put out of temper; is harsh and rugged; is bitter, and, so to speak, is ill na-

natured to the last degree. He appears to be the great rock of ages, whom nothing of the kind could move. He that is above all the real praises of men and angels, must be far above the flattery of either. He that must humble himfelf to behold the things done in heaven, had nothing here to engage him: How must the praise of hypocrify found in his ears! not only flat, but worse. He was moved with anger and hatred. Ready and rapid anger burst out of him in words full of repulse and feverity. They gave him the best character that could be defined; and in return he gave them the very worst. Says he, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? A tempter is the wickedest, and an hypocrite the basest man that can exist: both put together make up the character of the devil, and are what make him to be a devil. A better character than they gave him, cannot be defined; nor a worfe than what he gave in return. This came from him fuddenly as if it was waiting to come out; instantaneous without a studious or thoughtful pause. It was not worked out, but burst and flowed. He did not fay, you feem to me to be hypocrites, or I am afraid, or I doubt, or suspect it; but you are fuch: he does not speak as one who supposed, but as one that knew: not by degrees,

degrees, but at once: not by reasoning or information, but by unerring omnisciency; to whom the inward is as visible as the outward man; and the heart, with all its purposes, as apparent as the face. Here is not a trace of one treating with fellow creatures, whose designs he suspected, or had inferred or collected from concurrent circumstances: not as a learner, or a sound reasoner; but as one to whom every creature is naked and open, and has nothing to do, but to pronounce the thing as it is.

Now observe the conduct of Jesus here, and mark the inftantaneous apprehension of the stratagem in operation, and the scheme formed against him; the correct knowledge he had of strangers and their secret plots to ensnare him; his accurate, concife, and extempore definition of them and their defigns; the harsh and repulfive language with which he stopped at once the fawning mouth of flattery; the sudden command and rapidity of his reply, with the free and disentangled, the high and superior state of mind apparent on the occasion, in the presence of assembled throngs. I fay, observe this, and fay, does Jesus appear to be a frail man, or the unerring fon of Gop? Here a frail man would have been obliged to suspend his judgment, whether these

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men were true or false: rather would have been apt to fall in with their beautiful and courteous address. Ahijah the prophet, to prevent his being imposed upon, was informed of the coming of Jeroboam's wife, and told that she would pretend to be another woman, I. Kings xiv. Jeremiah the prophet was imposed upon by the hypocrify of Johanan, and the rest of the Jews; and remained fo till Gop undeceived him, Jer. xlii. The apostles knew nothing what fort of men they received into the church, as members or ministers, till they had made it known by their after lives and conversation. But Jesus knew these men; what they were, what they wanted, and what they had been doing; and that instantly: as I said, not as one who knew by degrees, but at once; not as one liable to mikake, but absolutely unerring and infallible.

2. The divinity appears in his answer to the question intended to entangle him. It was this, Tell us what thou thinkest, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? His thoughts of the subject, put into plain words, was all they wanted from him. The state of the nation, and the manner of wording, will hardly admit of a doubt, but that endeavours of the kind had been made before;

but to no purpose. They have him now between two parties, in a situation as they thought from which he could not free himself, but must come to the light like all other men.

But the answer he returned was absolutely above their reach, and left them altogether in the dark about him as before. The divinity shines with inimitable beauty and lustre in it. He made them prepare the way, and furnish him with matter for it themselves: himself, or friends, or fervants, shall do nothing. Says he, bring me a penny of the tribute money. He would not move a finger; nor fend a fervant; but orders them: they obey, and bring it dutifully according to his word. Bring it that I may look at it: not to handle it and hold it in my hand, but only look at it. Why not hold it in his hand? That would be too much; would be his doing fomething; no, they shall do it. They do it; they hold it that he might have nothing to do but look at it: they are tractable as children; they are obedient as angels. Says he, whose image and superscription is that which is upon it? He would not tell them, but he will make them tell him, whose it was. He would not do any thing, or move either himself or friends; but orders them authoritatively what to do, and what

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to fay; and they must do as he bids them. Whose is it, fays he? They fay, Cæsar's: fo it was: here is truth and obedience readily and fmoothly going on hand in hand. Now, he has entangled them in their talk, and took hold of their words before the multitude, and faid, Render therefore unto Cæfar the things which are Cæfar's, and unto God the things which are Gop's. The resolution and decree of the council which fat upon the business was to entangle him in his talk, and take hold of his words before the multitude. He made them therefore wind themselves into the snare, and place themfelves in it before the people present. All the people fee them, and they fee themselves where they had undertaken to place him: and, what must be mortifying beyond expression, he made them conduct themselves into it, by their own words and actions, without his doing any thing at all. They had held a council and drawn up an address ingenious and eloquent; but he made them place themselves in the snare intended for him, without council; off hand, and extempore. It cost them contrivance, toil, and anxiety; but it cost him nothing: neither care, nor one thoughtful pause. They had promised themselves a fight of him entangled and agitated; hither and thither

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in his mind, not knowing what to fay, nor where to turn; but alas, they find it come to pass, and realized in themselves. He is terribly stern and farcastic, but neither does nor says any thing: he orders and treats them as children before all the people, making them do and say as he bids them; and himself all the while at full leizure, as it were, with his hands in his bosom. They are obliged to tell him whose image and superscription it was, though they knew that he could tell them, as well as they could tell him. This was in order to make them prepare a suitable presace to his answer.

The answer is wonderful. Render therefore unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God, the things that are God's. At this the enemies, the orators, the mighty disputants marvelled; greatly marvelled, and were amazed. The critics heard the words, and saw with astonishment where they placed him and them. But let us consider what they saw so very marvellous in it, that they could not conceal their surprize and wonder before the people. They saw, that as to its doctrinal nature and contents, it was self evident. It assigned unto God and Cæsar; and thereby to all men, all the rights, which truth and justice challenged. The vastness.

of the matter and variety of its contents were great and wouderful. This came upon the mind with rapid force and conviction, equally powerful with learned and unlearned, and required neither confideration, discussion, nor a pause. No court nor country, nor person could for shame say, I will consider whether the things that are God's should be rendered unto God; and whether the things that are Cæsar's should be rendered unto Cæsar. This I say no person could do; because the doctrine was self evident, and impressed itself upon the mind without time or labour.

AGAIN, as to the present political dispute and his thoughts of it, they saw the answer undecisive and unfathomable. It left his mind as much out of sight as ever; and the dispute just where it was, and as it was before. They saw it and marvelled. He said nothing that could be looked upon as an affirmation, or a negative, as to the tribute in question; whether it was lawful or unlawful, and whether men ought to pay or not to pay it. Nobody could know his duty in the present case, whether he ought to be a Pharisee or an Herodian, from any thing to be found in the answer he returned. Those masterly and piercing critics saw, that he had worded it insathomably deep, correctly cautious and evasive:

had with unexampled management, nicely paffed the controversial point and left it untouched: and consequently could be made neither a friend nor foe to either fide. Here he would teach no man; nor disclose his mind. Their meek and humble request was, Tell us what thou thinkest? and teach us what we ought to do in the prefent case; but nothing to inform or instruct could be found in the answer. At this they were amazed. They could find no word, nor found, that could be faid to be, either for or against. So that they faw with aftonishment, the management and dispatch with which he shut himself in, and them out, and left them as wife as they were before they begun. It feemed to be an answer to the question, and yet not a word in it could be applied to the matter in hand, to show the legality or illegality of the thing; or what he thought of the subject.

THEY further faw that it was absolutely unactionable. It was an actionable answer they wanted; and thought to put it out of his power to avoid; but they saw that he had so worded it, as to render it unactionable at any court, civil or ecclesiastical; of Jews or Gentiles equally. No critic, however skilful and acute, could pick any thing out of it that would furnish an arti-

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ele of accusation upon any principle of the par-

LET us now try whether by the answer we can make him in this affair a Pharisee, and therein an offender against herodianism. He was asked, whether he thought the tribute was lawful or not? whether it ought to be given to Cæfar, or not? Did he fay, the tribute is not lawful, and men ought not to pay? No, he faid no fuch thing: the answer conveys no idea of the kind; but affirms, that the things of Cæsar ought to be rendered and delivered to Cæfar. The Herodian then must hold his tongue, and say that he has no matter of complaint or accusation. For an Herodian himself could not say, that men ought to give to Cæsar, the things which were not Cæfar's. If he had the things which were his, nothing further could be faid or demanded in the case. But let us try to make an Herodian of him; and confequently an offender against the Pharifees. When asked whether the tribute given to Cæsar was lawful or not? whether men ought, or ought not to give it? Did he fav, the tribute is lawful, give it to Cæfar? No, the anfwer evades the terms of the question: does not pronounce the word, tribute, lawful, nor give: and substitutes instead of them, things and render.

The answer then left out the tribute, whether lawful or unlawful; and affirmed only, that they ought to render the things of Cæfar to Cæfar. And no Pharisee in the world could have the face to fay, that the things which are Cæfar's ought not to be given him. No Herodian then could have the affurance to fay, that the things which were not Cæfar's, and to which he had no right, ought to be given to him. No Pharifee, as I faid, could have the face to object to the one fide of the answer; and no Herodian to the other: both therefore are equally destitute of plea, accusation, or aught else, to be managed against him: both must equally affent to what he faid, whether they would or would not. It would not admit of doubt, nor require time to confider iting for all a gradient allies watered recollect.

But the word, therefore, is in the answer. Let us see whether we can pick any thing out of that. The word, therefore, proves the answer to be a derivation from something that went before. It was said, that the image and superscription on the money were Cæsar's; render therefore unto Cæsar, says he, the things which are Cæsar's. Will not this prove that he inferred and afferted the legality of the tax, from Cæsar's image on the money? Nay, but we Herodians

Herodians must not receive him as a brother upon this principle. For if we admit of this, we admit that if any competitor of Cæfar should be able to get his image and name upon a few pieces of money, his title to a revenue by taxation, will be as lawful as that of Cæfar; and therefore this will do neither for Cæfar. Herodians. or Pharifees. We cannot with fense or fafety to either fide, then, handle the tribute as lawful or unlawful from the image and superscription; for this will encourage usurpers and competitors. But let it be remembered, that he did not fay that either the image or superscription were Cæsar's; it was we faid that. With what then shall we connect his therefore? Why, feemingly with our faying, Cæfar's image and superscription; but really or certainly with nothing. We can make nothing of it to furnish us with any matter of information, accufation, or blame to be laid to his charge. This produced three effects which are left on record.

felves in the fnare, and him out; and were amazed at the wisdom, power, ease, and dispatch with which he made them place themselves in it, without a possibility of helping themselves, or hiding their shame and confusion. How mortifyfying, how unexpected a thing!

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2. It filenced them. This proves, that however wicked and mischievous they were, they had no small share of penetration and discernment. They saw that to attack, or defend, or turther challenge such a superior, would be ignorant and fool hardy; and therefore they thought it best to hold their tongues and say no more. They saw that what he had said, was past any criticism or construction in their savour.

3. THEY withdraw. What they had faid and done had brought them to great shame, and him to great honour, before a sufficient number of witnesses, chosen by themselves. And as they could see nothing in the place but their disgrace, and his praise; they justly thought it best to withdraw and leave it to him.

HERE is the divinity of Jesus rendered visible. Reading the passage renders it evident; but what must it have been to see and hear him. When Æschines was banished, he took the oration of Demosthenes, which condemned him, along with him; and reading it to an auditory in the place of his exile, they all shouted and clapped their hands, and said, that they did not wonder that he was banished. Æschines replied to this effect, Ah, what would you have said, if you had heard him pronounce it!

Bur what must it be to see and hear Jesus dealing with these orators! His pronunciation did always tear, or tune the ear; rend or heal the heart. Never man spake as this man, was the testimony of enemies.

ADD to this, the case of the woman taken in adultery, recorded John viii. and we shall find our LORD in a fituation fimilar to that above. placed between the two fides of the question, so that let him take which he would, he fell into a fnare. The case that he was to decide upon here was, whether this woman, taken in the act of adultery, ought to be stoned, according to the law of Moses, or not? Moses had commanded them to stone her, but they would wish to know his mind upon the subject. This they said in order to have fomething to accuse him of. If he had faid no, they would fay he was an enemy to Mofes, and confequently could not be the Mesfiah foretold by Moses: if he said yes, they would fay that he was inconfistent with himself, having feveral fuch characters among his followers, whose fins and shameful conduct he had never seemed disposed to censure and punish. Here also they had fully affured themselves of success, and anticipated the victory as certain. For whether he faid yes or no, was not material, fince thereby

he would declare himself inconsistent with Moses, or himself; either of which would prove him not to be the Messiah, and therefore worthy of death for his pretensions to it. He conducts this affair and deseats his enemies in a manner very different from what we had above: he was with the smooth politicians rough and harsh, but here quite the reverse: he was then sudden, rapid, and severe, but now as extraordinarily calm and mild. They bring the woman: they state the fact as certain: they cite the law, and their duty by virtue of it: and then desire him to tell them what he thought of the matter. Now let us consider wherein God was manifest in sless here; and we may see it,

- I. In what he did.
- 2. In what he faid: first, to the Pharisees; second, to the woman; and thirdly, of himself.

FIRST, in what he did. He wrote with his finger on the ground. When the thought came into their mind, they looked upon it as a wonder. Here is the fact beyond a doubt; here is the law beyond dispute: if he says, stone her not, he has settled the point that he is wicked, and an open enemy to Moses. If he says, stone her, he has proved himself an hypocrite; for elsewhere, and even every where, he is free and easy with

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fuch characters; fuffers them to touch him; eats and drinks with them; admits them as followers: and, not only that, but with authority pardons and declares them in favour with Gop. His fituation then is inextricable, and we shall have him, do and fay what he will. They promifed themselves a fight of him, startled and amazed at the question; turning pale, and looking wild and agitated, at his wit's end: now they had found out a way to deal with him, and had cut out work more than enough for him for that day. O! they promifed themselves an entertaining fight of haste, hesitation, and to and fro. They fet out, therefore, very early, and would lose no time: they state the fact, as I faid, present the woman, cite the law, and then ask his opinion.

But when they had stated the case, Jesus stooped down, and with his singer wrote in the dust of the sloor; and seemed as if he was altogether ignorant of their being there, or their having said a word to him. They knowing that their situation was advantageous, and would be sure to bring things about in their savour, would not drop the cause, but continue to ask him: he still goes on writing on the ground. This writing on the ground was doing nothing at all.

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This was to fignify, that fo far from cutting out work for him, that it was ease and rest: so far from being more than enough, that it was nothing at all: left him during the moment wholly unemployed, as a man at a loss for something to do, and knew not how to dispose of himself. And whereas, they had promifed themselves a fight of him amazed, and at his wit's end, he not only appears fedate and calm; not only disengaged and at leifure; but as one perfectly careless and trifling: as one, who was either so negligent that he cared for nothing, or elfe had nothing to think of, or to do with his hands. Therefore things turned out wholly contrary to their expectation: instead of being bewildered, he was becalmed; and fo far from having too much work upon hand, it left him without any thing to do.

THE unitarians I doubt had lost a night's sleep upon the business, and were in too much hurry to see him amazed and involved in difficulties, to stay for their breakfasts; but alas, he seems to be so easy, that they cannot get him off his trisling amusement. He goes on writing, and they go on asking and waiting for him to give over. This signified, that what they did in this affair was nothing. For the prosecution was M 2 undertaken

undertaken without any regard to the honour of Gop; with no respect and obedience to the law of Moses; with no fense or reference to the evil of the crime; with no wish to secure the peace and honour of fociety; else they would have brought the man there as well as the woman. These were the great ends of the law. And as they had none of these in view, they were employed in doing nothing: and were going on and perfifting in it. Of this they had an inftructive view and illustration in his persevering to write with his finger in the dust. And further, the action; as it was a fnare to take him, was altogether trifling. This affair therefore, as a matter of alarm to him, was harmless; as a profecution to honour the law, was nothing; and as a fnare intended to take him, was idle: it was all and altogether like that writing on the ground, which was useless. This action of writing in the dust then, was intended ironically and farcastically to upbraid, rebuke, and expose. But he did it, as he did every thing elfe here, with a peculiar air and fort of ease. This action was full of language, that as this writing was trifling, fo was their action: as this writing was in dust on the ground, fo their action was not from above, but earthly and from beneath: as this writing would

be foon trod, obliterated, and out of fight, fo their plot would inftantly vanish: and as this writing begun and ended with the moment, and upon the spot; so would the snare they had prepared for him.

SECONDLY, I pass to what he said.

1st. To the Pharifees. Says he, The finless of you, first, let him cast a stone at her. rose in consequence only of their importunity, and faid, as Moses had commanded it, they might, and let the finless begin; and then stooped and wrote as before. This re-petition feems to be defigned to fignify that what followed, is not to be imputed to any meaning, or menacing looks that he cast upon them. Elisha, after he had fpoken to Hazael, fettled his countenance upon him till Hazael was ashamed, giving him to understand by his looks that Gop had informed him what he was going to do. 2 Kings, viii. 11. Jesus here avoids every appearance of this: stoops down that they might not think he had any suspicion of their business, nor any design to discompose them. Again, he gave them leisure to reflect upon their own minds and actions, and apply what came to mind to the present case. If he stood up and looked at them, it would have been an item that he expected them to be-

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gin: and would have been very embarrassing and confounding. He gave thereby time and leisure to consider and compare things together, without any interruption, or any thing to discompose their minds. And further, he afforded them hereby an opportunity to slip away, as they thought, unknown to him and unnoticed. This he knew they would be glad of. For if he looked at them, they would hardly know how to attempt it. But he, as they thought, was as out of sight, and they might embrace the lucky moment to get out of the place without his knowing any thing about the matter.

When our Lord had faid, the finless of you, first, let him cast a stone at her, the eldest looked at himself, and began to examine and search into things, and presently finds a number of things new and old; and they all appear in a worse light than he was used to see them. And by a little further consideration, he looks upon himself not to be the proper person to begin. And as they were enough to do the business without him, he quietly withdraws. The next in age takes the same course, and by a review and survey of himself and various things, judges that he is not the person called forth to begin the work; and so gives them the slip. The third in age sees and recollects

collects many things of which he is ashamed, and indeed he is resolved not to touch a stone with his fingers; and he thinks it best for him to go. home, and so he withdraws. And so it went on to the youngest, who, like the rest, thinks it a very improper thing for him to do; for he can eafily fee that he is not finlefs, nor any thing like it, but the contrary. God forbid that he should be severe against a fellow sinner. Nay, he will leave the woman alone and quit the place, and go home to his own bufinefs.

I was not used to look upon the scene in this manner, but the contrary, till lately. Obferving that ease and calmness was to be the peculiar complexion of this event, it is reasonable to conclude, that it was carried through all the particulars. They were not thrown into great perturbation, but moderately impressed, just enough to make them defift like men of coolness and moderation. For they conducted themselves with perfect regularity, fuch as is feldom feen. The eldest begins and the next in age after him, and conducted it as if they would not break the order and honour of the birth-right. They manage their going off with great and uncommon order. They go one by one quietly, not all at once, in a body; that neither the fight, nor found of their feet,

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feet, might occasion noise or disturbance. But did they mean any thing of this? No, but were over-ruled by him to convey themselves home orderly and decently, and place themselves in their own houses from whence they came, without their knowledge or any direct design of the kind. And I am inclined to think that they were, as if they did not know, or did not chuse to know any thing about the affair.

2. THE divinity appears in what he faid to the woman. Says he, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? No man, LORD. Neither do I condemn thee; go and fin no more. Where are those thine accusers! Not those partial judges and false accusers; not those hypocrites and villains who have violated the law of Mofes by bringing thee to be punished, and excufing the man, equally guilty; not those murderers, who only aimed at thy life and mine in this treacherous business. This, or to this effect, would have been the language of a mere man. Says Elisha the prophet, 2 Kings vi. 32. See ye, how this fon of a murderer hath fent to take away mine head, when the king had fent a person to flay him. A mere man, though a prophet, by the treachery and villainy of the plot, the greatness of the danger and the deliverance, would have had

had his paffions hurried, and his mind agitated and moved upon this occasion, as that of Elisha. It would have diffurbed his language, and would have given a vehemency to his manner of speaking of the men, and to the woman. Here nothing of man appears, either in disclosing the plot, or violently blaming and reprobating the evil doers, or in extravagant pity for the woman. Man would have betrayed his weakness, and proved his being no more than a frail creature, by fome of these things, and others that might be named. But his stile moves as if nothing provoking, furprising, or threatening presented itself to the mind. It is conducted as if there was nothing that called for any particular language or emotions.

But the most striking appearance of divinity here is, his undoing so deep and complicated an affair, seemingly without doing any thing at all. He carries himself in this respect, as if he was a common man that could only say yes and no, without being able to discern, or enter into the subject to know what was right or wrong. He acts as one that neither knew nor suspected any evil design or partiality in the matter, though it was evident in the face of it: seems as one that did not know the law of Mose: did not know

that they had cited it partially: did not know that they ought to have brought the man to be punished as well as the woman. He appears as one ignorant of their having withdrawn from the place: knew not what was become of them: is as one that knew not whether they had, or had not condemned the woman. And with regard to the woman, he takes upon him neither to know, nor do any thing in her cafe: he neither condemned nor justified her; nor took upon him to fay, or to know what she deserved, whether the one or the other. In a word, he is altogether as a common man, as one of the lower, or lowest class of men: as one who had no capacity to penetrate into the nature of any thing that was proposed, and could only say and do as others. They faid the woman was taken in the crime. He did not ask them whether the discovery was made by accident or design? or what they had done with the man? this, and much more he is filent about, as things above his capacity. Moses, they said, had commanded them to stone her. Well, if Moses has commanded you, do it then; he had nothing to fay. They would not do it after all, but left the place; to that he had nothing to fay, in praife, or blame: he would not fend for them back;

nor fay they were just or unjust; to be commended or blamed. And to the woman, he had very little to say. He does not take upon him to know whether she deserved blame or pity; and whether what they did to her was right or wrong. But as no man beside had condemned her, neither would he: he would do as the rest, without taking upon him to say whether she did or did not deserve it. In short, he is as if he knew nothing but to say yes or no; and do, or not do this, or that, as others did before him. He said nothing; he did nothing; he let every thing to go on as they said and did.

AND thus Jesus did the greatest wonder by doing and faying nothing. Here therefore as the Prophet has it, "Was the hiding of his power. " And by hiding it, it became the more con-" spicuous. And herein the foolishness of God " is fully feen to be wifer than men, and the " weakness of God, stronger than men. Says "God the father, Isa. xlii. 19, 20. Who is " blind but my fervant? or deaf, as my messenger " that I fent? Who is blind as he that is per-" fect? and blind as the LORD's fervant? See-" ing many things but thou observest not: open-" ing the ears, but he heareth not." None is blind or deaf, or foolish or weak, this way, but he that is perfect. THIS

This was a very spirited affair, and begun accordingly; but JESUS quieted and becalmed the whole: was indolent and lingering in the bufiness, and infected the profecutors with the fame indisposition, and the whole died without convulsions or founds. There never was a trial for adultery or any thing else so conducted before nor fince. No profecutors ever dropped the profecution before, when the justice of the cause was not called in question; the evidence admitted, and they defired to proceed according to law: none ever quitted the court before, without being confuted, cenfured, or fuspected: and, above all, none ever before or after quitted the court according to the order and honour of the birthright. This was altogether by the over-ruling power of him who gives orderly movement and revolutions to globes and feafons, without noise or violence.

JESUS then by concealing his divinity rendered it more visible; by modesty appears more sub-lime; and by mimicking an ordinary man, is more than ordinarily divine. He is God in the likeness of sinful sless, God in the habit, in the attitude, and in the stille of the least and lowest of men, scattering the wicked and defeating the deepest plots of earth and hell. No man of the lowest

lowest class can make himself look less; but look at what is done, and he ceases to be little, and becomes, if it were possible, more than God. Wisdom and power, glory and divinity are apparent, and call upon heaven and earth to admire and applaud. Solomon was celebrated as a wonder of wisdom and presence of mind, when he called for a sword to divide the child between the two harlots, whereby the real mother was with certainty discovered; but contrasted with the wisdom of Jesus here, it vanishes away, and ceases to be a wonder. Behold a greater than Solomon is here! Now I proceed

3. To observe how the divinity appears in the manner in which he speaks of himself. Aster he had finished the business, it does not appear that any body said any thing at all: and therefore he speaks of the praise due on the occasion to himself. Says he, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The affair took place early in the morning, and by this time the sun had made his appearance, and presented himself to the eye with that ease and majesty which is peculiar to himself.

THE fun had just freed and disentangled himfelf and the world from the shades and setters

of night; so had JESUS freed and disentangled himself from the snares and agents of hell. The fun had just conquered the darkness and blackness of the night; fo Jesus the villainy and blackness of the powers of earth and hell: had vanquished their malicious, murderous, and treacherous designs, hatched in the dark. The fun had freed himfelf from the shades of night and scattered and chaced the whole out of fight, without noise or any apparent motion or action; fo IESUS fcattered and drove away fnares and enemies without doing any thing; with majestic leisure and ease; refembling the progress of the fun and its effects. The fun is in no toil, labour, or difficulty in freeing the world from the darkness of the night and driving away the shades; he seemingly does nothing at all; fo Jesus feemingly neither did, nor aimed at doing any thing. Again, the fun had not only made the darkness flee away, but had put all the other luminaries out of fight; the moon and stars cannot shine, or even appear when the fun enters; fo Jesus, by his manner of conducting this affair, not only confounded these wicked men and their dark designs; but also eclipsed the glory of the wisdom and goodness of all good men. His conduct here sets him fo far above them, that they appear to be nothing

thing at all. Their actions viewed by themselves appear excellent; but when contrasted by those of IESUS, they lose their beauty. Take for instance that celebrated act of wisdom done by Solomon. mentioned before, and view it by itself, or in comparison with other men, and it will appear wonderful. But if you compare it with that of Jesus here, its glory vanishes away. For Solomon was puzzled and could not bring it to an end without extorting it by a sham: he called for a fword, and pretended that he was to do a thing shocking to be named, at which the real mother shuddered and raised the cry. True, the thing was wifely and wittily conducted and happily ended; but pauses and difficulties appear, and recourse is had to the most violent of all means. The words found with horror in the ear, and the idea is shocking. But in this affair of Jesus, all is ease, innocency, safety, and leisure. No difficulty appears; no violence used in words or actions; in reality or pretence. The scene moves on, and reaches its end here, as if order and innocency were the only things intended. Nobody exposed: nobody ruffled: nobody censured, or threatened, or disturbed. The accusers are made to behave fo well, that they would not diffurb or incommode the company by going off in a body:

they treat one another fo respectfully, that the younger would not, in going away, rudely take the place of the elder. And thus they are all fent home, as I faid before, decently to their families. The woman also is mildly spoken to and dismiffed, and she walks off orderly. The whole affair is conducted with perfect ease and tranquility. And lastly on this head, as the sun was in his way to noon day, fo Jesus would go on to reveal himself, till his divinity would be as clear as the fun in his meridian glory and splendour. It is justly therefore added, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. That is, an observer of my actions and life, shall know God with certainty, which is life eternal.

Jesus further affirms, that it was right in him to bear witness to his own glory and pronounce his own praise. The sun is the only proper herald of his own glory. Nobody can truly publish and set forth the majesty, glory, and power of the sun, but the sun. When the Pharisees within hearing, heard him say, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; they said, thou bearest record to thyself; thy record is not true. He answered, though I bear record

of myself, yet my record is true. That is, I grant no other man ought to do fo; and is not to be heard, if he does; but it is right in me to do fo. It is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. The law requires two credible witnesses who are competent judges of the subject. I therefore must be one to bear witness to my own character, for nobody but my father and myself are competent. I am rom above, ye are from beneath: I am therefore too high above you, for you to be admitted: My father is one of the witnesses, and as there is no one else competent to join him, I am one that beareth witness in the case. The sun also in his progress towards meridian glory and majefty is the witness and herald of his own praise; and fo am I, and much more, for I am the true fun that filleth the world with light and life.

AGAIN, he speaks of himself as the unerring judge. He still alludes to the sun, which is the great judge, that sets every object before a person in its true and real character, as great or small, good or evil, beautiful or otherwise; in all these things the natural sun is a judge and discerner between good and bad. Jesus affirms, that as he was the light of the world, so he was the judge of the world, and must be so, for

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is but the same thing: and adds, that he was not alone in any sentence that he passed, but the father also was of the same mind, and joined. Now let me make two or three observations upon the matter and manner in which he thus speaks of himself.

- I. I OBSERVE, that for any mere man to fay in the face of a body of men, I am the light of the world, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall see the light of life; would be vain, false, and blasphemous. This none but Gop can say of himself. For it afferts, that all the intellectual and fpiritual light, confifting in knowledge, wisdom, judgment, reason, and understanding came from him only, as the natural light of the whole world comes from the fun: that as the natural fun was the fole illuminator of the natural world, fo was he the fole illuminator of the rational and intellectual world: that as no man could have day light but from the fun, fo no man could have intellectual light but from Jesus. No one ever would, or could fay this of himself but Gop. He alone is the light, and he alone could make the application to himfelf.
- of himself, that himself and God the father were

the two proper persons, according to the law, to give evidence and bear record to the glory of his character, would be extravagant presumption.

3. I OBSERVE, that for a mere man to fay to his fellow creatures, ye judge after the flesh, but if I judge, my judgment is true, for ye are from beneath, but I am from above, is a thing impossible: it is too extravagantly bad to come from any bad man. In God, the fon of God to fay fo, was becoming his great name; and very fuitable to the occasion, wherein he had given a specimen of his ability, which placed him so far above all men. To be the true and real judge, in opposition to a superficial judge who cannot fee far into the subject, is the sole prerogative of Gop. For no one but himself can view a good and a bad action in all their connections and derivations from times, places, and fituations: confequently none but himself can tell, how much good is in a good action, nor how much evil is in a bad one: none therefore can pass a real fentence to justify or condemn, to punish or reward. Jesus fays here, that his judgment was true, Jesus therefore is God and not man: God omniscient and infinite, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. word, Jesus conducting this affair as he did; N 2 calling

calling himself the light of the world; the proper evidence with his father of his own real character and actions, and the true and real judge of good and evil: if he meant hereby to make me think little of him, the design has miscarried, and has had the contrary effect. My reason adores him as God: deliberately adores him, and cannot do otherwise, if I would. Activity often fails, but my reason never does. In him are hid and concealed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; but in the case of the woman above, he brought it forth into light and rendered it visible in a special manner; and then commented upon himself, and preached himself as the brightness of his father's glory.

6. We proceed to view Jesus in applause, in order to watch and see, whether he looks like God or one of us. There are several instances of the kind, but I shall confine myself to one only, which is his entrance into Jerusalem, to keep his last passover, previous to his final sufferings and death. This is recorded in Mat. xxi. Mark xi. Luke xix. and John xii. In general he was in reproach, but here we find him in the midst of applause, and the highest ever seen or heard. It took its rise in Bethany, two or three miles from Jerusalem, where he had raised Laza-

rus from the dead. Let us consider then the praise itself; the impression it made; the prophecy that had given notice of it; the means used to bring it about; and the appearance which Jesus made on the occasion.

THE first thing to be viewed is the praise bestowed upon him, together with the extraordinary triumph which accompanied it. He mounted the ass at Bethany, in order to fet out toward Jerusalem: an incredible collection of people appears from the adjacent villages and country round, resolved to attend him thither: tidings of his coming reach the place, with affurance that he was upon the road. Hereupon, both natives and foreigners in the city, instantly, and at once refolved to give him the meeting. Immense bodies iffue out of the city: they are agreed as one man: they are glad: the body is strong: the mind is innocent: the face is joy: the motion is life, and the foul is as the chariots of Amminadab. They strip, with determined resolves to engage in the praise: they clothe the ground under his feet with their clothes: they drefs the fides of the way with their dreffes: they beautify them with green branches off the trees: they carry the emblems and affurances of peaceable intentions and good-will in their hands. The N 3 harmless

harmless, throngs, by and by meet each other in the road: the vehement shouts burst, and meet, and mingle; and heaven hears a voice from the earth never before founded in her ears. They turn round and fet their faces toward Jerusalem. An infinite multitude leads the way before him, and another follows. Not one is weak: not one is fainty: not one is weary. Triumph is in the eye: activity in the limbs; and energy in the frame. They wave their palms, and feem to be walking forests. Inspiration begins to impart her thoughts to every mind. She breaks out, and moves, and goes upon human tongues without number. Her voice is loud; her language is lofty and her stile is unusually strong. Hosannah begins to go, and numberless human tongues loud and vehement fend it round and round!-Bleffed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD, breaks out and follows !- Hosannah in the highest, swells and repeats the found!-Hosannah to the fon of David!-Bleffed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the LORD, is faid with all the voice, and heart, and tongue!-Peace in heaven!-Glory in the highest!--- The earth trembles; the air is convulled; and the hills and valleys echo and answer each other with the joy and honour of the day.

Moses fays, the night in which the children of Israel came out of Egypt, was a night much to be observed unto the LORD. Margin, night of observations. And so it was; but nothing comparable to this day. Nothing like this in sight, or sound, or sense, was ever seen on this side the gates of heaven.

LET my foul now place herfelf upon a bank by the road. I view, I wonder, I gaze, I examine with a critical eye. An inoffensive army moves by me: no garments rolled in blood to be feen: no life, nor limb loft: no military weapon in the hand: no hostile look in the face: no figns of enmity and ill-will appear. Goodnature smiles in every face, and creates the same in all around. Yet I fee them full of life and rapid motions: they fcarce feel the ground: they step with ease and agility, unexhausted and unannoyed by the fultry heat of fo many smoking breaths. The voice is loud and fonorous, and the passions glowing and vehement, as they are harmless and inoffensive. Their language is the grandest that ever created beings used, and the ideas the highest, and their extempore song in every point of view the loftiest in found and fense that ever was heard among creatures. Here, heaven is rendered visible to all men; her busi-

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ness is brought down to the habitable parts of the earth; her stile is adopted; her songs are sung; her triumphant scenes are acted in miniature; her adorations imitated; and men, for the day, are turned into angels. He therefore, that would know what they are doing, and how they act in heaven upon their high days, may see it here, as I said, in miniature. And thus, in the energy of celestial praise and hosannahs, he was conducted into his temple.

NEXT, consider the impression it made. It impressed the whole city. All Jerusalem was moved, faying, who is this? This description strikes the mind of the reader with the ideas of powerful emotions, furprise, and enquiry. What could be the cause? Did they not know that Jesus was coming, and that the people had gone to meet him? This cannot be doubted. We must therefore understand the words as the expression of their amazement. The hosannahs and praises sounded so solemn, and lofty; the scene carried such evident appearances of unaffected grandeur, fimplicity, and energy, that it furpaffed all comparison and credibility, and came upon the mind with irrefiftible impressions. No person could sit still: no person could keep his place: no person could be unmoved, or keep

his tongue from meddling. Who is this? Who is thus honoured and exalted? Who is he that triumphs in this elevated stile? Who is able to contrive and conduct a scene so replete with gladness? Who can enter Jerusalem with such power and majesty? In a word, they could not tell to whom these high epithets of praise and glory could be applied; nor who could claim fuch a day, or enter into Jerusalem with such an air of command and superiority. The multitude anfwer them, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. This answer proves that the multitude knew not what they did. For this was too much for any prophet; by far more than any prophet of God would, or durst accept of. Any, and all of them would have fallen upon their faces and rent their clothes, if fuch honours were offered to them.

THE buyers and fellers in the temple must have been powerfully impressed. It appears by the history that he went into the temple by himfelf, with peculiar indications of authority and designs: and as soon as he went in, he began to be violent. The three Evangelists say, that he cast out all those that bought and sold in the temple. They do not content themselves with saying, that he bid them get out; or that

he fent them, or turned them out: they have fomething harder than that to express. He cast them out, conveys as much, as if he had emptied, or shovelled them out as dirt. I think that he had expelled them at every feast after he appeared in his public character, at least every passover. In John ii. it is said, that he went up to Jerusalem at the passover, and found in the temple those that fold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, fitting: and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the theep and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money and overthrew the tables; and faid unto those that fold doves, take these things hence, and make not my father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. The ardor and vehemence of his looks then, and the power with which he showed himself displeased, and drove them out, struck the disciples with wonder. But as they had repeated the offence, he entered in at this last passover with more feverity; and the power of his anger no man could bear. Had he turned this frown upon a rock, or a mountain, it would have trembled. Every man therefore takes the nearest

nearest way to get out of his fight. The disciples probably were spectators of the scene on the outfide. They faw them iffuing and emptying themselves out at the gate; some running, some tumbling, and others falling over them. Thus they come out before him, pushing and driving, and treading down one another; and rather than be there, would creep, or roll themselves out of his fight. The place being thus cleared, our LORD returned and flung down the chairs, the tables, counters, cash, bills, books, and all: and this appears to be the reason why the Evangelists use the word, cast out. He as it were shovelled them out of the place into the sfreet as dirt: and they were glad to get out of his fight, and leave property to a large amount, behind, and withal hear themselves called a den and club of thieves: and no man could fland to complain, or make reliftance in word or deed. They were fometimes very forward in citing Mofes; here they might have done it with justice and profit to themselves. In Ps. xc. He fays, Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy wrath, fo is thy fear. Had they remembered this, and one would wonder what did hinder them, they would have known him with whom they had to do, and implored

plored his forgiveness. They might easily fee, and even feel, that his face could instantly unframe them. The fight of his features in wrath annihilated all their courage, and left them neither fortitude nor inclination to appear where he was. How easy then, and natural the inference, man is like unto vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away: but this is he that looketh to the earth, and it trembles: that toucheth the mountains and they smoke; the thunder of whose power who can know? This was a fair, and confequently a merciful warning, which they might have improved to prevent their falling into the great fin of putting him to death. For after this transaction, the smallest reflection would have convinced them, that his submission to it, must be a voluntary act of his own.

The next thing that presents itself, is the impression upon the children. This was more remarkable than any thing that had happened. When the buyers and sellers had been cast out, all sorts of diseased patients came in to be healed. As he went on with these miracles, the children cried hosannah. These were seemingly near, and surrounded him; for such were always objects of his special notice and condescension. As each patient received his cure, and presented himself

perfectly well, the children would burst out into shouts of applause, and hosannahs to the son of David. Hereupon the chief priefts and feribes are at their wit's end. What to do, or fav, they knew not! They therefore asked him this senfible question; Hearest thou what these say? What could hinder him? The courts echoed, and rung with their shouts and hosannahs, and all the people heard them and feemed to keep filence and left the praise to be carried on by them: and one would think by the history, that they gave fuch pleasure, that noboddy else was willing to have them interrupted. Dost thou hear them? fay they. Says he, I do. Did you never read, Out of the mouth of babes and fucklings thou hast perfected praise? Our LORD leaves them to connect this with the prophetical pasfage of which it is a part. Pf. viii. 2. Out of the mouth of babes and fucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and avenger. This gives us to understand, that it was not only these children that were in the temple that were impressed, but all the children in Jerusalem of every class and age. Those upon the knees; those in arms and on the mother's breasts, were inspired to add some meaning notes of infant gladness

pladness to the honours of the day. Age and youth, with youngfters, babes, and fucklings, on the breafts, were supernaturally moved to open their mouths in his praise. And John the baptist was the forerunner and earnest of this, who leaped with joy at the approach of Jesus, before either What could binder him of them were born.

This was the most surprising of all the works of the day. The shouts and triumphs of the multitude might have been ascribed perversely to fome natural cause: such as, that they had heated and worked up one another by extravagant thoughts and representations of his miracles: that his miracles were wrought by the power of the devil: that he had engaged the populace, by many favours and indulgences, to be on his fide: and, that the buyers and fellers in the temple had been furprifed and fuddenly terrified and overawed by the multitude who attended him. These things they might say to evade, or at leaft, to abate the force of the other supernatural appearances. But the emotions, the joy, the exulting, and the praise of the children, babes, and fucklings, furpaffed all wit and invention to pervert and misapply; and rendered the argument in favour of his divinity irrefiftible. Here the enemies were pinned down, and bound to be still inabale

and keep filence. They could not fay the innocent infants were the engines of the devil: they could not fay, that it was to be accounted for by any thing natural and common, for fuch a thing had never been feen: they could not look upon it as an accident, for it was general, and the number impressed was great: they could not fay, that it was owing to prejudice, pre-poffession, contrivance, or instructions, for these were incapable of being wrought upon by any of these ordinary means; nor as I faid could they think, nor have the face to fay, that the innocent infants were the inspired tools or engines of the devil herein. In short, it is, it must be, and it cannot be denied to be, the certain, the direct, the fublime inspiration of God. Here, then, the enemy is totally stilled and tamed: they feel themselves insupportably fore: they fail, they pine, and fink into a fullen and devilish filence. All that had been done and faid before, had failed to do this. They had ever till now found fomething to evade every miracle and argument in favour of his divinity. But the children wholly filenced them, and ftruck them all dumb. They found any and every fort of answer, or evasion, absolutely impossible. As I said, till now, they always made some shift to say something, at least,

they mostly did. But here they utterly fail, and have no other shift lest but to sin with stubborn silence and resolution as the devils do.

AH! little champions! The post of honour and the point of fame, was affigned unto you! The Godhead of Jesus, the strength of the argument, the power of its affertion, and the perfection of the praise, was left to be finally settled by you! Angels and men could not do what you have done. You have filenced and stilled the enemies of God, and deprived them of every colour of justice in the revenge that they are going to take. All adults, both angels and men, may be influenced by felfish motives to offer false praise: they may club, and plan, and agree in a pre-concerted scheme; but infants cannot. A charge of fraud and imposture will not fasten itself upon them, for no-body will hear it. The Tews acknowledged that the messiah was to be the fon of David and the fon of Gop. This they did not dispute nor question; but said that Jesus was not the person. But the children in the temple cried and shouted that Jesus was very person; in which babes and sucklings through the whole city made and gave out fome fupernatural figns of concurrence. Here arians, unitarians, and all anti-christians are confuted and overthrown. NEXT

NEXT look at the prophecy which gave notice of this day, and is applied by the Evangelists. It is in Zech. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass. Mat. xxi. 45. All this was done that it might be sulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass. Joh. xii. 15. Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

By the prophet and apostles, it appears, that Jerusalem had a vehement call to rejoice and triumph in the event of the day; and the cause was the greatest that could be named. The greatest thing was brought unto her that can be pronounced, or come into the thoughts of men and angels. Salvation: all the result of the purpose, will and desires of infinite goodness: all grace and all glory: eternal life and eternal joy: deliverance from eternal death and damnation: pardon for millions of sins: peace with God and conscience: and, in a word, all the good that infinite goodness in all its sulness could think

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of for men. Tell ye Jerusalem all this. All this is coming, and is just at thy doors. And all this is brought by the greatest person that can come in at thy gates. He that brings it is thy king. Not a king, but thy king; the king of Israel; the king of kings, whose kingdom ruleth over all.

Thou city of Jerusalem, why didst thou not rejoice? Say, why didft thou not drown the voice of the multitude and children by shouts of praise? Why didft thou not fling open all thy doors and windows? Why didft thou not in a passion and pang of joy, fend all thine inhabitants into the streets, calling to the tiles, stone, and timber, for loud hosannahs? Why didst thou not clap thy hands and wish for streets of polished gold, as not good enough for the feet of the afs that carried him? Hadft thou done this, (O foolish and peevish city) thou wouldest have been this day the queen of cities! Thy walls had been falvation; thy gates had been praise: thou shouldest have been called, Sought-out; A CITY NOT FORSAKEN; THE JOY OF THE WHOLE EARTH! But thou knewest not the things which did belong to thy peace and honour, which drew tears from the eyes of God. Thou art moved, and askest, who is this? He is thy king, behold, he

is thy king! Lo, he cometh to thee from eternity, whose goings forth have been from everlasting; and bringeth all the unsearchable riches of grace, the manifold wildom of God, with crowns of glory. Hadst thou decked thy doors, thy windows, and thy fireets; hadft thou spread thy filk, thy fearlet and fine linen, and strewed thy gold and filver for him to ride over them, and hosannah'd his name up to heaven as he passed by thy doors, thou shouldest have been the city of the nations, the metropolis of the world, and the gate of heaven to this day: thou shouldest have been the throne of God and delight of men. The hofannahs of the multitude, and of the children however was great, and made a memorable day, and imitated heaven upon earth, the good box

WE are next to consider the means used to bring it on. This was not by a public advertisement to appoint the day, and request people to be there ready at such an hour; nor by handbills, nor agents, sent about to form and prepare the company: no dinner prepared or promised; nor a piece of money in hand or hope; nor one glass of wine to cheer the spirits, and begin the joy. What then could induce the whole, and bring together such a concourse of people? Were no bribes promised or slipped

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into the hand? No interested views, or hopes of advantage suggested? Nothing of the kind. What, indeed, he had done to diseased and distressed people, did work upon the mind; but that was not the primary cause: it seemed to operate and it is said to do so, especially the raising of Lazarus. But this could not be the main cause. For emotions and inclinations were not sufficient to conduct so immense an affair, with the speed and innocency which is apparent through the whole.

IT proceeded from a word which dropped from CHRIST that morning. He fent two disciples to an adjacent village, where they should find an ass tied with her colt. They were to untie the ass, and bring both to him; and if any objection should be made, they were to say, THE LORD HATH NEED OF THEM. When they were doing as they were ordered, the owner called them to an account accordingly, and demanded the reason of their conduct? And upon their pronouncing, The LORD hath need of them, he instantly complied. It appears, that both the disciples and the owner were entirely ignorant of the defign, and yet, upon their pronouncing that word, out of the mouth of Jesus, he let them take both away, without objections or enquiries; or even a paule.

Why did he not require an explanation? Why did he not ask what it was for? Why one would not do? What he was to have for the use of them? Who the LORD was? When he might expect to have them back? No bargain, nor agreement, nor a penny, nor a promise that he should ever see them again! Why so? The word NEED had entered into him. It hastened; it hurried him, that he had no time to ask one question. Say so, says CHRIST, and straightway he will fend them: he accordingly instantaneously complied. Jesus knew the need of the afs, with all the following events: he pronounced the word as the matter lay in his mind; and the energy of it entered into every mind, and every feeling concerned in the business, till the whole scene was finished. The owner of the ass felt the necessity of fending them immediately; the multitude, both natives and foreigners felt the neceffity of the hofannahs and triumphs; and the children, babes, and fucklings were guided and over-ruled by the power and influence of the fame word. The LORD JESUS had need of the ass, and of all the subsequent means in connection, and pronounced the necessity of them; and that created the necessitating idea and impulse in all therein concerned. Therefore, he declared to 0 3

the scribes and Pharisees, that if men were to stop and hold their tongues, the very stones would instantly have cried out. There was that day no material difference between the actions of the adults and infants. Neither the one nor the other knew what they were doing. Even the apostles were ignorant, and remained so till after the day of Pentecoft. They, and of course all the reft, acted under the direction and influence of that over-ruling word. An irrefistible and pleafing energy carried them on in all the scenes of the day. And it was necessary, very necessary, that the LORD JESUS should show, and prove, who he was, by his entrance into Jerufalem just before he yielded himself to be taken and condemned to die. This would help to flay the drooping, or diffracted minds of his people, and render his enemies inexcusable, and instruct future ages. All the events and hofannahs of the day were necessary; and the necessitating word went out of his mouth, and conducted and prefided over the whole. And when that end was accomplified, all the agents and inftruments returned to their former state.

THE next thing to be confidered is the appearance that Jesus made on the occasion.

Notice is always taken of the person who is the object

object of public praise; and it is generally asked how he looked? And a mortal man seldom fails to make himself little, either by immoderate joy, or none at all. He looks either excessively pleased or with indifference and contempt. He therefore looks uncomely, because he cannot keep himself from being too glad, or not glad enough.

BUT JESUS was fairer than the children of men, and appeared in the midst of his praise to be the brightness of his father's glory. He appeared meek and lowly. He always did fo, but never as upon that occasion. He had referved the perfect view and beauty of meekness for that day. He was just, and brought falvation, and therefore knew that he was worthy of praife, and knew the value of just homage, and treated it accordingly. Praise is facred, and ought to be wifely and justly rated and received. All that beheld him, faw inimitable looks of lowly and fweet approbation of what was done. Not a feature fignified a flighting thought of the honour: on the contrary, every one in his praise and hosannahs had kind and condescending looks, worth more than the praise that occasioned them. Not one had a look of haughty difdain, nor a contemptuous fmile; but his countenance was one uniform expression of esteem and acceptance of

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the persons, and what was done. It does not feem, that this was critically and profitably obferved by any body at the time, but the holy fpirit brought it to the remembrance of the apostles afterwards. The prophet had done every thing to raise expectation, and excite attention, and especially to view him critically in this particular; but it proved ineffectual. Had men looked at him, and critically gazed, and stared him in the face, according to the prophecy, the effects had been great and happy: fome perhaps did in some degree. It is plain that there was nothing fo conspicuous and remarkable among the events of this day, nor any other that ever passed over the heads of the sons of men, as his appearance.

LEST it should be thought that I exaggerate, and magnify things beyond their bounds, let the words be recollected and considered. Say ye, the LORD hath need of them, and he will send them straightway—And again, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. This must be something uncommonly great that would induce him, who was so sparing of his words, to speak so strong. Before this, there had been no day, from the creation of the world, nor any day since, in which

which there was a danger of the stones crying out. This was peculiar to that day, and no other, either before or after. But it is certain, that if men had kept silence, they would have cried out then, even immediately. Had the multitude forborne, they instantly would have burst out into hosannahs. There was something in that day, that rendered the praise absolutely necessary: if men did not, stones must; and immediately would have done it in the hearing of men.

And the things was this, omnipotence was that day to render itself visible in his face, to remove reproaches, and affert its own innocency among creatures. This is what men desperately and mortally hate: the thoughts of omnipotence are the plague of their minds and feelings. They apprehend that it is fierce, haughty, and dangerous, as it is great. The whole omnipotent Godhead therefore came out, and feated itself in the features and looks of Jesus, and made an open revelation of itself to all. And when it appeared, it was all meekness: all lowliness: all innocency, gentleness, and benignity. Two important ends then were in view, the first was, an exhibition and manifestation of God, in the midst of celestial worship and adoration. In the midst

of praise, surrounded with hosannahs, extolled with shouts, acclamations, and hallelujahs, he looks meek and lowly: meekness and innocency are the predominant features and expressions; and the louder the praise, and the loftier the acclamations. the meeker he appears. By this he is known and diffinguished from all glorified faints and angels in heaven. They, are meek and lowly, wonderfully and beautifully fo: but compared with him, they have none at all. They will not, they dare not show their faces before him. They hide them, and adore him alone as meek. They do not know how to look fo; perfect meekness is the prerogative, the beauty and glory of Godhead. By this he is distinguished and known; by this he infinitely excels all; by this he works upon, and wins, and steals the hearts and affections of all celeftial inhabitants: in this he glories, and is glorified: by this all the creatures there fee him to be all, and themselves to be nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. The fight of this endears and unites all unto him fo, that they would loofe existence rather than him. of D . A common water of supplication

THE other confideration was with reference to the present state. As I said before, had they all stared at him according to the moving and awakening

awakening prophecy which called them to do fo. they would have met with eternal love, and their own falvation face to face. They would have read in his face all the thoughts, the counfels, the decrees and good-will of GoD from eternity toward them. His face would have impressed and drawn itself upon their imagination with everlafting power and force, that they would never have loft fight and remembrance of it. And the fight, I was going to fay, would have healed all the diseases of body and mind. Hard and harsh thoughts of God would have dropped off, and they would have told the whole world, that God was the meekest being in the universe. The worship on earth then is that of perfect meekness. They would have clapped their hands together and faid, what fools we have been to run away from fuch a being; and live in flavish dread and terror of him!

THE prophet would not, so many ages before, have spoken and exhorted with such vehemence to behold him and rejoice, if there had not been something of extraordinary weight and worth in the sight. The exhortation worded fully stands thus, Rejoice greatly, O Zion; shout aloud, O Jerusalem; tell ye the daughter of Zion, sear not: behold thy king cometh unto thee; just, meek,

meek, lowly, having falvation, and riding upon an ass. The ass is the lowest and nearest the ground of any creature that carries burdens; and in appearance and movement, the remotest from pomp and ostentation. When the Godhead therefore was to make his public appearance in his inconceivable meekness and lowliness, this was the fittest creature in the creation to carry him. I was going to say, the only creature sit to be employed on the occasion. Fools are here assamed: some of them blush, others mock: why so because they are sools, and for no other reason.

But I was going to observe, that this is declared to be a sight to remove sear and create joy. Tell ye; tell it out; tell it to all: sear not, but rejoice: rejoice greatly and shout. Salvation rode, and shone in full, in his face. His countenance was the eternal bible of the father, where all the secrets of his mind were to be seen and read. Here, infinite forgiveness would have looked at men, and would have poured itself in their saces with all its assurances. He carried salvation with him that they might see it, which to the criticising eye would have showed itself visible and correct in his features. Meekness would have seized the sight and crowded itself

titles into the heart, and laid hold of the affections. His lowlines would have purged away ignominious passions, and exposed human pride: would have encouraged access and approach with confidence, and rendered the thoughts of God easy and awful. For so great was the sight, and so visible the dignity, that had all kept silence, the stones, as was said, would have been certain to burst into shouts and hosannahs every step of the road as he passed them by.

O STUBBORN ignorance, what hast thou done! What losses through thy dulness and absence of mind! What sacred things, what heavenly, what high, what divine things have been lost owing to thee! What jewels and crowns of glory hast thou trampled under feet! This day was to be but once, and timely notice was given to be ready to watch and mark it well, because it was never to be again, and was for ever lost through thee!

HERE, therefore, the divinity of JESUS is asferted, and variously appears. He is declared to be the king of Israel. And every body knows that the king of Israel is the LORD GOD; Jehovah Elohim; infinite in being, duration, and power. He is pronounced by adults and infants without number, to be the son of David: and the scribes and Pharisees, priests and people knew that the son of David was the son of God, and have never disputed it. Hosannah and glory in the highest, and peace in heaven, were sounded in his public praise; and these are the highest notes of praise; due only to God, the highest of all beings. And in the midst of these high and mighty shouts and acclamations, he was neither vain nor insensible as mortal men are, but was in meekness and lowliness the brightness of his father's glory, and proved himself worthy of all honour.

7. LET us view him in his last sufferings: And here we find him in the paschal chamber, in the garden, at the tribunal, and on the cross. His appearance and manner of acting on these occasions, must carry enough in them to prove who and what he is: and to enable every reader with certainty to know, what he owes him; whether adoration, as his creator; or common respect, as a fellow-creature. He will require of every man what is due, according to the ideas which his actions naturally convey. If he conducts himself herein as a fellow-creature would do, we must honour him as such, and nothing higher: if he carries himself as God, we must offer him nothing less than the honour due to GOD.

God. An error here on either fide shall not escape the wrath of heaven. And as it is salvation or damnation; heaven or hell to be right or wrong in idea, we may depend upon it that the doctrine is so fully stated and proved, as that no errors may happen, but such as are wilful.

FIRST then, let us view JESUS in the paschal chamber, that we may escape the fin and punishment of placing him either too high or too low. Let us consider him in the preparatory steps to it. Luke xxii. 7, 13. " Then came the day " of unleavened bread, when the passover must " be killed. And he fent Peter and John, fay-" ing, Go and prepare us the passover that we " may eat. And they faid unto him, where wilt " thou that we prepare? And he faid, behold, when " ye are entered into the city, there shall a man " meet you, bearing a pitcher of water: follow "him into the house where he entereth in. " And ye shall say to the good man of the " house, the master saith unto thee, where is the " guest chamber where I shall eat the passover " with my disciples? And he will shew you a " large upper room furnished: there make ready. " And they went and found as he had faid " unto them; and they made ready the pass-" over."

This paffover was to introduce his last sufferings, the awful particulars of which he had repeatedly foretold. He realized the whole to himself, and detailed them to others before hand. Now, could any one in view of fuch a fcene, mention the introduction of it, with the ease and gravity which we find here, but he in whom felf possession is perfect? He proposed the preparation himself, whereupon the disciples defired to know where he wished to have it done? A mortal like us, at naming the thing, would have shook his head and faid, little, alas, do you know the fense of the words! To you they promise a feast, but they affure me of condemnation, and every fyllable founds with my death. Manage the preparation as you will: whisper the subject to one another, and let me hear of it as little as possible: it's approach brings to mind every thing to be dreaded. One like us would have delivered himself to this effect; and nobody could blame him, because it would be the language of his nature as a man. And if the view funk him down, made him unable to walk, and obliged to be carried to the chamber; what could we fay? We should be bound to say, that the cause justified his conduct. But when the scene presented itself to the view of Jesus; when it realized and connected

connected together all its parts, and placed itself within a few hours of him; he spoke as one who knew that his patience and ability to bear, was every way adequate to what was to be borne: and this no one could do, but he in whom discretion is infallible, and with whom nothing is impossible. But to be a little more particular;

His stile on the occasion, and the title that accompanied it, are too high for a creature to use. The master saith, my time is at hand; where is the guest chamber, where I may eat the paffover, is not the stile of one speaking to a fellow creature. The master, indefinitely expressed as here, is a title, that neither man nor angel durst bestow upon himself. No prophet, nor patriarch, nor any fervant or messenger of God, however extraordinary, ever stiled himself, the master, as here, in the absolute. It is his title who has the maftery over all, and is without an equal. Again, my time is at hand, is also a phrase that sounds too high for a creature to use. By it is meant his trial and great fuffering next day. If I heard a fellow creature the day before fuch fufferings express himself as here, I should be bound to think, that whatever came of him, he had a great deal of impertinent

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dignity

dignity, and unbecoming fublimity about him; and that lowering his stile would make him look much better. But if Jesus, as the master and disposer of time and events, had fixed the moments of his own trial and death, with all its appointments and ends: if he had ordained the beginning, progress, and end: if he had power to make, and had made the whole subservient to his own defigns: if he had ordained it to be the means of far greater glory to himself and disgrace to his enemies: if, in a word, he had ordered it fo as to make it the highest honour and glory of divinity, the falvation of the world, and eternal shame of opponents, the time was his, and that in every fense; and the speech is full of grace and beauty. And that this is the fense intended, the facred history proves. My time is at hand, then, afferts that the commencement, the progress, and conclusion of his approaching fufferings, were his own: the time was his own, every moment of which was to give existence and date to fuch events alone as were fubservient to his great ends. In the mouth of a fellow mortal, the words would be flat and impertinent then; but in his, they are graceful and divine. Further, the manner of asking for the room is not in the stile of a fellow creature. Say to the good digility

good man of the house, the master saith unto thee, my time is at hand, where is the guest chamber, where I may eat the passover, is not the usual mode of speaking between man and man, on fuch an occasion. It is the language of a fuperior. In asking for the use of the man's room, which was prepared for the family, he made himself the master of the master, and all that he had. He did not demand the room, nor beg for it as a favor, nor promifed in return either thanks or payment. So fuperior a stile was never feen or heard, and yet modesty itself has never been offended with the fight or found. Again, the manner of relating what the disciples would meet with in the city, does naturally attribute to Jesus more than what is to be found in mortals. He mentions the man they would meet with the pitcher of water; the house into which he would enter: the room, with its fituation, fize, and furnished state, in a manner above the common mode. It naturally conveys the idea of a perfon, whose knowledge was not borrowed, but his own: not by degrees and connected reasoning, but at once. I am fensible that criticism may give it another turn, and class him herein with other prophets. But it cannot be done without betraying a mind unwilling to receive the natural

P 2

and artless idea. The manner of his doing it. and its being related, invites and tempts the unbiaffed reader to ascribe omniscience to him, and to honour him accordingly. He puts himfelf down as the master; not in some degree, or of fome things; but indefinitely and absolutely of all things; of all men and their ways; and had them with all their minutest actions in common life before his face, and every moment under his eye. Further, the compliance of the man of the house is evidently introduced as a proof of divine power in Jesus. The history puts him down as a stranger, unacquainted with our LORD. and wholly unknown to the disciples; else the name and place of abode would have been direction sufficient: and the passage induces one to look upon him as a man of property. In this case, one would think that the message would ftartle him. We might expect that he would break out thus. The master-never heard any thing to come up to it !- Who is The master! What, absolutely! What is he the master of all, and of every thing then! How came he to be my mafter? How came he to be mafter of my house? How long is it ago fince he acquired this dignity and headship over people no way concerned with him? My time is at hand, he fays—did ever any body hear fuch language! Who can tell what to make of fuch words? Where is the guest chamber, for me to eat the passover!—Is this the way to ask for the use of my house! Who, and where is the man that takes to himself all this power and superiority! No man ever made me so far his inferior before. This, or somewhat like, would have been the result, if Jesus had been one of us.

But more than man was at work. The disciples were ordered to speak thus, The master faith to the good man of the house, my time is at hand: where is the guest chamber where I may eat the paffover with my disciples? I will keep it at thy house. He speaks as one that had the whole scene before his face at the time, though as yet invisible and future. In other words, as one to whom futurity is present and familiarly known; and whose right to dispose of men and things is absolute. His calling himself indefinitely and absolutely the master, gave him the room, which the man of the house had furnished for his own use; but that word would have been fure to have [prevented any other. Any other man fending for it that way would have offended and shocked the owner; but from JESUS it came with fweet and powerful command

mand and carried away his mind inftantly to a confent, without demur or enquiry. The word mafter, pronounced out of his mouth, maftered the man and all his inclinations. And had it been the whole house, the owner's compliance would have been equally free and ready; for Jesus being the mafter, speaking the word only, mastered the whole.

WHEN the hour was fully come, he entered the room with the rest of the disciples. All things confidered this was nothing less than an act of omnipotence. For here his fufferings were to begin; and all fafety, all delays, and escapes were to be at an end. I am deeply interested in this chamber, and therefore I will be attentive to all the particulars; critically fo. And I will go fo far as to tell my reader, that whoever is wife will do the fame. I fee him enter and looking round; he saw the room furnished, the table laid, and the lamb roafting. A fight, had he not been the mighty one, that would have made him instantly faint away; for it described and held to his view, all his fufferings in miniature.

Now we have him in the room, let us compose ourselves to hear what he will say. Either God or man must come out, and sound himself in the words that we shall hear. I call my soul to hear; I call my faith, my reason and all that I am, to hear the first sentence that will come out. If nothing but man is within, nothing but man can come out; and if there is nothing but God within, nothing but divinity can proceed out of his mouth. The first words that came out of his mouth were these:

WITH defire I have defired to eat this paffover. with you, before I suffer! Whether we consider these words in themselves, or with the subjects in connection, they are wonderful, and place Jesus far above human nature. Take them in their connection, and they appear wonderful. When he entered the room, he faw himself in the emblematic lamb in the depth of death; in the heat of wrath; under the curse of the law for fin; cruelly and barbaroufly triumphed over by his enemies. The garden and the agony there; the scene of the next day were all before him. The disciples also sat about him; one just going to fell him into the hands of his enemies for money; the other with oaths to deny him; and the rest to desert him and return to their former unconverted state. Now in such a state of things, to come there in any manner with confent would be great. To submit to be carried there without objections or draw-backs, would be very great. To be there when brought with-out fullen and gloomy filence; without upbraiding and accusing words, or calling up some ill natured things, would be great. This much, I say, would be great. But to say, with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer, leaves me in amazement whenever I look over the passage. As already hinted at, not to oppose every persuasion and means to bring him to the place, not to protest against it, or exclaim, O deplorable situation, would have been very great. But express a desire of being there, had it been but in the least degree, is strange and wonderfully great.

But if we consider the words in themselves, we shall find, that not only he desired it, but desired it most vehemently. With desire I have desired it, is a phrase not to be met with, nor paralleled. It conveys the idea of a sore and painful longing: a long and ardent desire for the moment, multiplying and increasing itself by looking forward to the event. Desire put him to wish and look at it; and looking at it made him desire it with increasing desire. But what could this be owing to? Was he fond of suffering then? Very far from it, in itself considered;

but confidered as the proof and seal of his love to us, he was so. Therefore, relating to this event, he cries out, Luke xii. 50. I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened (pained) till it be accomplished! What! Will he then baptize himself? Certainly. He will baptize himself God; God for us: God with us; and for us. As we are to be baptized unto him, to be his people; he first baptized himself unto us to be our God: God in love with us.

HE longed, therefore, greatly for this passover, that he might come into the chamber, and in fight of the lamb flain, and under the heat of the fire; and in the midst of the apostles, just going to use him cruelly: in order to say distinctly and deliberately, With defire I have defired to eat this paffover with you, before I fuffer. Well, but could he not fay the words before, with as much propriety, if not greater? No, the words could never have been faid either before or after. They must be spoken in fight of the lamb and in the midst of the apostles as described above. They must be said on the spot where every thing urged and provoked him to fay, with defire I have defired never to fee this passover, nor the faces of the guests. would

would give a found and fense to the words; an energy of divinity and love, which they could not have derived from any other moment, before ar after.

Tesus defired this occasion, therefore, with great defire; for hereby the glory and science of divinity would rife higher than ever. When the angels faw the LORD in a manger they fung higher than ever. They all faid glory in the highest then. I should have thought that they would wring their hands, and weep; and that all heaven would cry till the voice was heard down to the earth. But they fung because God's goodness appeared greater, and his glory rose higher in their mind. They knew that he was good before, but never knew that he was fo good as this. But how much higher must their ideas rife, when they heard him fay, With defire I have defired to eat this paffover with you, before I fuffer, where every thing concurred to provoke him unto hard speeches, with wrath and indignation! He speaks of this passover, as if he was to meet with love, and ease, and respect, and every thing to his wishes. Did I say, as if to his wishes? I say that every thing was to his wishes. Here were a confluence of disagreeables; a multitude of offences; a world of fin

and finners before him in miniature; every thing that could make him fick of human nature, weary of the world, and make him wish himself out of it. This then is an occasion for him to prove himself God in love with man. God in love, in patience, in goodness, in gentleness, and meekness, leading men to repent of all their hard thoughts of him, and teaching them to approach him with confidence and affurance. That unalienable attachment of the divine to the human nature, found in these words with power and emphasis. If he would sup with us that night in the person of the apostles, and had so vehement a desire to do it; what is it that he will not do? What he faid to them he faid in fense and effect to all; for with him is no respect of persons. To you, O men, I call, says he, and my voice is to the fons of men.

After these words, while the supper was getting ready, Jesus fell into a solemn chain of contemplations, mentioned John xiii. 1. revolving in his mind these great ideas; That the father had given all things into his hands; that he had come from God, and was going to God; that the devil had now put into the heart of Judas to betray him; and therefore, he knew that the hour to depart out of this world unto the father

was come: and supper being ended; that is, made ready and set upon the table—they all thought that he was going to begin to eat. But instead of that, he rose and lest the supper on the table; laid aside his garments; and girded himself with a towel; poured water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel: and when he had done, sat down and explained the action.

Bur what was the matter that he could not go to his fupper, and let others do the same? What ailed him? Love. His love to his own that were in the world, came over him and forbad him just as he was going to begin. God is in love with man, and has been from all eternity. To wash the feet of all men in the perfon of the apostles, was to him therefore a more natural action, than to go to supper, when it was before him. He was moved and carried away by his great love, that could fee nothing fo great as itself, and had nothing but its own views and motives to be governed by. He therefore did not call for water, but took it, and poured it, and applied it with his own hands. He did not call for one to carry the bason with him, but made the disciples sit down, and stooped to the ground, and infifted upon having their feet,

one by one in his hands, and washed and wiped them: and upon being opposed by Peter, insisted upon his compliance.

This washing of the disciples' feet is the forgiveness of fin, and indeed our deliverance from it intirely. Peter at last, by what Jesus said, understood it in that light, and thereupon cried out, not only my feet, but my hands and my head. But Jesus affured him that this washing was of fuch a nature, that washing the feet made a person clean every whit: wholly freed from all fins whatever. Clean every whit by this action. fets it up very high, and afferts that the apostles, all but Judas, were by it perfectly justified and fanctified. And this action, which was done only to the apostles personally, yet passes over unto all others, and is their falvation, if they believe and repent: if not they perish. Washing the disciples' feet was washing away the offence and damnation of all men. The apostles stood here as a deputation, representing the general body. This at first they were ignorant of, but understood it afterward. Says Peter, Lord, dost thou wash my feet. Jesus saith, what I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Says he, thou shalt never wash my feet. If I do not wash thy feet, thou hast no part with

with me. Nay then, not my feet only, but my hands also and head. Jesus saith, the washed, needs but to wash the feet, but is clean every whit.

PETER did not at first apprehend that the action had any relation to fanctification and pardon of fin; but by what was faid in answer to his objection, he understood that it did, and thought therefore that he needed more than his feet washed. Our LORD pronounced this action to be the cleanfing of a person wholly and univerfally. His will and his word pronouncing it, made it so. There is in every action, all that he wills and declares to be in it. He declares the washing of the feet here to be the total cleanfing from fin, without which a person can have no part with CHRIST in glory and happiness. The whole of fin is cruelly and proudly treading God and men under feet. Washing the feet therefore here is declared to be the entire removal of all the dishonour put upon God and man. Therefore our Lord afferts below, chap. xv. verse 3. Ye are already clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

THE action also is declared to be an example which the apostles were to imitate. Says he, I, your LORD and master have washed your feet,

ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example. Yet we do not meet with one word to tell us that the apostles ever did so. What are we to infer? Shall we suppose that they disobeyed? No, they did it not in the letter, but the sense, which they afterwards understood to be the design. Christ said, they should understand him hereafter.

THE case here appears to be the same as that of the Lord's prayer. When ye pray, fays CHRIST, ye shall fay, Our father which art in heaven. They never faid fo literally, but in fense, which was the design of the place. That is, they prayed short, simple, and declarative of the relation between Gop and us, which is that of a father and his children. So these words alfo, Mat. xxviii. Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the fon, and of the holy ghost. They never made use of this form in the letter, but the fense. That is, they baptized in the name of the LORD IESUS, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily. And fo in the case before us, they did as he taught them in fense and substance. He that would be the highest and greatest, must humble himself most; must be lowliest; must make himself the least, and the servant of all. And especially especially, they were to treat one another with love, kindness, candor, forgiveness, pity, and patience, similar to what was expressed in this act of Christ. Remove sin, end quarrels, preserve and increase love by acts of condescension and generous forgiveness, and humility, as I, your Lord and master, have now done. But a word or two more of this below.

BUT this action of our LORD is fet up very high in the place where it stands, by the subjects among which it appears. Not only it came on in the paschal chamber; in the night in which he was betrayed; while the plot against his life was fixing its cruel refolve; and while the paschal fupper lay on the table; but while he was in the act of contemplating the most solemn subjects. When he was revolving in his mind his fituation; when he knew that his hour was come to depart out of this world, and go to the father; that he had loved his own, and would love them unto the end; that the father had given all things into his hands; that Satan had now put into the heart of Judas to betray him; and that he had come from Gop, and was going to God. While he was contemplating, I say, these things, and revolving them in his mind; that of washing the feet came in. The assemblage of fuch

fuch great ideas, and the approach of fo many awful events, did feemingly render the thought of washing feet contemptible. But the facred history, not only draws the action in connection, but makes it the refult of those very ideas. He knew that he had come from the father, with his love to men, and was going back on the fame business; that all things were given him for the same end; that the devil had now fixed the mind of Judas to betray him at all events; and, therefore, knew that the hour to wash the feet was come: the hour to do it never had been before, and never would be again. There was a confluence of ideas and events peculiar to that hour, which brought on the action. The feet of Judas must be washed by JESUS, when he had just finished the contract, and sat brooding over the act of betraying him: the lamb must be in fight, fmoking hot to reprefent his fuffering the divine wrath for the fins of all men. Men, in all their fins, and he in all his fufferings were in fight. Then faid, the father, do not lose a moment. The hour is now come, and it will never be again. He did. He washed their feet in the love of the father, and as his messenger. He came from the father into the world to do this deed, in order to prove that

that God is love; and he must not return, nor see the face of the father till it is done. Therefore, this alone is the hour, and no other: for it must be done in that which called loudest for the vengeance of God on all mankind, that his love might be sealed and stamped upon the human mind with all power and authority. This then establishes the love of the father, and the divinity of the son; and sends forth a miracle of good will among the sons of men.

Bur with regard to washing the feet in a general way, it was practifed as a matter of civility and courtely. When a person went to his friend upon a visit, or a journey; the master, or mistress of the house, washed the feet of the vi-I do not doubt that the apostles did this, and had it done to them in common with other good people. But this was entirely of a civil and domestic nature, and constituted no part of the ordinances of the church. It was only the private and friendly practice of good people in their own houses as a matter of courtefy and civility. And when goodness, humility, and brotherly love shall come to predominate among men, they will in all probability do the fame again. And till it is fo, it is better left alone. in code this deed, in order to provi

Once more, should misapprehension, or some other accidents, occasion strife, and breed a bad spirit among christians, ministers or privates, I have thought that washing the seet, as Jesus did that night, might be a good step to heal the breach and restore friendship: and that he did intend something of the kind: not as an ordinance, but as I said before, a civil and domestic affair.

AFTER washing the feet was over, and some few remarks made upon the action, they went to fupper, which was ready on the table. In his discourse at the table, he observed, that in saying above, that they were clean every whit, he would not be understood to mean all of them: no, says he, I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen. But that scripture must be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. His loving and affectionate wish to sup with them that last night, and washing their feet with fuch tenderness and meekness, left Judas unimpressed, and unalterably fixed in his perfidious and bloody purpose. This when it would come out, would be very staggering to the Our LORD, therefore, begins in the words Q2 above,

above, to open it, giving them notice that there was such a scripture to be sulfilled. But this made no impression at all. Soon after, therefore, he suddenly broke out and said, One of the twelve, one of you that eat with me shall betray me. This gave an alarm, and produced an enquiry; one by one asking, Lord, is it I? He said, it is he that dippeth with me in the dish. Judas being the only one at the time that did so, was obliged to ask, Lord is it I? Jesus said, yes:

And hereupon, instantly another event intertupted the progress of the supper. For as they
were eating the paschal supper, he suddenly rose,
and took bread, and gave thanks, and blessed it,
and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, saying,
take, eat; this is my body, given and broken for
you; this do in remembrance of me. Then he
took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to
them, saying, drink ye all of it. For this is my
blood of the new testament, which is shed for
you, for the remission of sins: this do ye, as oft
as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. And
they all drank of it.

THE LORD's supper then was introduced and ordained in the midst of the paschal supper, suddenly and unexpectedly. And the Evangelists mark

mark it particularly that it was brought in, when, and as, they were eating the other supper. And it appears, that it was so conducted with design.

THIS was to fignify, that the old paschal supper was not annihilated, nor abolished, but passed into its new testament state. The passover was an ordinance to be continued for ever, as is declared in Exod, xii. Therefore it must be done before the old was finished, that in the eating, it might pass into its new and perfect state, as the gospel passover. When they began to eat, it was the old testament supper, when they finished, it was the new. Therefore the LORD's supper could not begin before, nor after; but in, and at, the eating of the old paffover: and it must derive its substance and elements from that table. It was introduced and celebrated by a part of the old paschal bread and wine, applied for the purpole.

AGAIN, the LORD's supper must be celebrated in haste, that Judas might be a communicant. Our LORD knew that in a few minutes he would be gone. The absence, perhaps, of any other individual, might be dispensed with; but his could not: he was a necessary communicant. It was necessary he should partake, in order to prove

Q3

that the death of CHRIST was for the worst of men: and if for Judas, the very work man that ever was, then for all. If any man born into the world was to be left out, Judas doubtless would have been the man. But he was made to eat the crucified body of CHRIST, and drink his blood, and therein the remission of his fins, and the falvation of his foul. This was to prove that CHRIST died for those who shall perish, as truly and as fully, as for those that shall be faved. The one perishes then, and the other is faved, not because CHRIST died more really or effectually for the one than for the other: but because the one chuses it, and the other refuses it. Judas has been declared, and even prophefied of as a fon of perdition but he is caught, and detained to eat the Lord's fupper, to prove that he was fuch, not by necesfity, but by his own choice.

FURTHER, this was done abruptly, in the midst of the other supper, so to word it, in the hurry of divine love. That is to say, Christ was out of patience to give us a better supper: to give us the true lamb of God to eat, and make us supper supper suppers. He was in a hurry to die for us, and could not stay for the crucifiers. He died on the table before their eyes; he broke himself

himself and poured out his blood for us and made us eat Gon and drink his blood; and feed, and feast, and become one with him. The old lamb went infipid in the eating: he therefore would treat us with himself; body, blood, and foul; and therein a new testament of grace and love eternal. He had been, as it were, eating us up in love, and embracing our feet; and now he will be eaten up by us. Says he, here is my body broken for you, take it: here is my blood shed for you to pardon you; drink ye all of it. Eat me, and drink me, and live in me and I in you. Let us be one, life within life; existing each in each. This do hereafter in remembrance of me: recollecting the hafte I was in to die for you: how I transferred myself over unto you, and unto all men in you: that I could not stay for my cross, and therefore, died in a figure before you: that I, as it were, went to pieces in love upon the table before your eyes. I gave; I divided myself among you, and that you supped upon me. Yea, remember for ever that I was your supper.

THE new supper being just finished, Judas it seems, put his hand by our LORD on the table, still unmoved, fixed and fixing himself in his bloody design. Jesus at the sight of the bloody Q4 hand,

hand, with natural emotion, said, Behold the hand of him who betrayeth me, is with me on the table! The son of man goeth, indeed, as it was determined: but woe to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed. Good had it been for that man, if he had never been born. This second declaration produced an alarm more distressing than the first. They began to whisper among themselves, and ask each other, who it could be, that he meant? Luke xxii. 21, 30.

HE then affured them, that he who received whom he fent, received both himself and his father: But thereupon he was troubled in spirit, and protested, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. They were now perplexed and looked at each other, doubting of whom he spake.

John was leaning on the bosom of Christ; Peter desires him to ask who was meant? Lord, says he, who is it? Some of the paschal supper being on the table before them; says he, it is he to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it in the dish: he dipped it, and gave it to Judas. Then Satan entered into him: he left the room: Christ says, what thou dost, do quickly: the disciples thought he meant, buy things for the feast, or give to the poor.

WHEN

WHEN he was gone, Jesus faid that now he was glorified: had but a little time to be with them: gave them a new commandment to love one another, that all men might know that they were his disciples; and that he was going where they could not follow him now. Peter asked where? and why not now? Jesus said, he should afterward. But why not now? I will lay down my life for thee. Wilt thou? Verily, verily, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice—John xiii.

THEN he said further, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. And after I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter said, though all men should be offended, I never will. Says Jesus, verily I say unto thee, that this night, the cock shall not crow twice, before thou hast denied me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee: likewise said all the rest.

AT the same time they had a strife, which of them should be the greatest. Our LORD said, that among the Gentiles, kings and rulers were called benefactors; but among you it shall not be so: but the humblest shall be the highest;

and the most serviceable the greatest. He then tells them, that he had appointed them a king-dom; and as they had continued with him in his temptations, they should eventually enjoy it, and sit upon thrones.

SIMON, Simon, fays he, Satan hath defired to have you, to fift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Peter said, I am ready to go with thee to prison and death. JESUS faid, I tell thee Peter, that the cock shall not crow, till thou hast thrice denied that thou knowest me; that is, it is I that fay it? and I fay it to thee, Peter by name, as the very man that will do fo. He further faid, when I fent you without purfe, or fcrip, or shoes, lacked ye any thing? They said, nothing. Then faid he, but now, he that hath a purse, let him take it; and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no fword, let him fell his garment and buy one; meaning it figuratively. For I fay, that this that is written must yet be accomplished, And he was reckoned among the transgreffors: for the things concerning me have an end.

Upon this, their magnanimity failed, and their courage began to fink into timidity and anguish

of mind, which prepared the way to their fall, and temporary apostaly. They understand confusedly by this last admonition to arm themselves, that he is going away, and leave them in trouble, shame, and danger; whereas they had been every day expecting to be made great and powerful. Alas! he is going away after all, without doing the business, and leaves us worse than he found us. At the sight of that their hearts were sunk with grief and disappointment.

Now, therefore, he applies himself to the work of comforting and encouraging them. This discourse takes up the fourteenth, fifteenth, and fixteenth chapters of John. In it he fpeaks not as one of us. He speaks of heaven with ease and familiarity as his home, from whence he had come, and whither he was going now to return. Paul was allowed to go up into heaven, and come back again. But all that he could fay of it was, that the scenes and transactions there were fo far above his capacity, that to attempt a detail of what passed and appeared there, was impossible for him, or any other mortal man. He fays therefore, that the king of kings dwelleth in the light that no man can approach unto, that no man hath feen or can fee; in his earthly habit. But Jesus discourses of heaven here, as

a place which had in it nothing new or strange to him: much less above his capacity. He speaks of it as beneath him, as the house is beneath the owner: as he who humbleth himself to behold the things there carried on, who disposes of and conducts all that is done there. He proposes it to the disciples as his father's house. Now in this long discourse, he appears to be God in general through the whole. But I shall point out some of the particulars only.

- 1. He proposes himself absolutely an object of faith to be consided in and depended upon in every case without fear.
- 2. He disposes of heaven as his own gift, and engages to settle his friends there.
- 3. He afferts that himself is the way to the father, and to heaven, and that no man can come but by him. I am the way, the truth, and the life, says he; no man cometh unto the sather but by me.
- 4. He promised to send the spirit of God as a comforter: and that his office would be, not to speak any thing of his own, but says he, he shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All that the father hath, are mine: therefore I said, he shall receive of mine, and shew it to you.

J. HE fays, that he is the true vine and men are the branches; and that they can no more do any good, and be faved, without faith in him, than branches can bear grapes when they are cut off from the vine.

HAD there been no more, these five particulars are by many degrees too much for any creature to say.

HE closes the business of the paschal chamber by an intercessory prayer. He first prays for the re-possession of the glory which he had with the father before the creation of the world. Then for the glory due for the work now finished. He proceeds then to pray for those who were given him out of the world, by the the father. These were the apostles and all their converts to the end of time. These all of their own accord give up the world, separate themselves from it, and withdraw into the church, and I therefore are not of the world. These are all given unto him to be faved. For these he intercedes, and for these only. As long as any man is a worldling, he is of the world, and has no intercessor with God, and is not of the number given to be faved. Those who give up the world, and are therefore not of it, are given to be faved, and Jesus intercedes for them. He prays

I. THAT

- dangers and enemies.
- JESUS, and the word of God.
- 3. THAT they may be made one with God, and therein made perfect and established in a state of peace and holiness.
- 4. And lastly, he says, father I will, that they be with me where I am, to behold my glory, and thy love to me before the foundation of the world. The stile of this prayer is too high for any one but he, who is in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God. In him it is becoming; but in any other, it would not be devout, but impious. The dignity of his person, and relation to God required this boldness and sublimity of stile; and the place of a creature would have required the contrary. What prophet, or apostle, or angel, could have the assurance to speak thus to his maker? Jesus is not a mere man, but God.

But we passed by one circumstance in the paschal chamber, wonderful to be related. The eleven disciples never knew who the traitor was, till they saw him in the garden. What shall I assign as the cause? Did not Christ intend and wish that they should know him? Most evidently

evidently by his conduct. He is diligent and folicitous in pointing him out, and making him known. Were not the disciples for knowing him? No men could be more desirous than they were. They were in perplexities, and earnest enquiries upon the head, as was most natural to be. Shall we fay that the apostles were not men of common fense? by no means; no men ever appeared to have a better share. What then, was not the traitor sufficiently marked and pointed at? Nothing of the kind could be made clearer. What then, was the matter, that they could not understand? I answer, the love of JESUS was in their way: was in their eyes and ears that they could not fee. In that chosen chamber, divine love left its invisibility, and came into fight: broke its filence, and fpoke. It exceeded and overflowed itself; and crouded the eyes and ears of the disciples with its own features, looks, found, and stile, that during that period they were incapable of taking in any harsh ideas. Love eternal had thrown off the difguife, and converfed like itself. He was falvation: was fo wholly paffed into love, that he was a perfect fight: fuch probably as heaven itself had never feen till that night. I am inclined to think that he had referved his best features for this **fupper**

supper, and therefore with defire had defired it. And when it came, he let himself come out into fight. A thousand miracles of innocency and meekness unveiled themselves in his face: and worlds of love rolled round in his looks. Then it was known to heaven and earth, and not till then, how loving and innocent he could converse and appear. When therefore, the traitor was pointed out, there was fuch innocency and kindness in the looks and voice that they could not think a hard thought. Love crouded itself into their eyes and ears, as I said, that it blinded them: hard thoughts of this kind could not heave themselves in their breasts. They thought therefore, that by treachery and a traitor he must mean something that they did not understand: and whatever it was, it must mean fomething very innocent; else he could not look and pronounce his words as he did. to but and

Some may be backward to credit this, though they may think it difficult to account for the disciples' ignorance. Yet I think it must be allowed that the idea is natural. For it is certain that eternal love brought Jesus there; and it is certain that nothing else could. Now if infinite love came into a predestinated chamber, to give mankind, who are his own image, the meeting

in a deputation, in order to show its energy to the whole; to remove all shadows and ceremonies. and put them out of office; to confound the lies told, and to confront and counteract all the hatred of earth and hell: if this, I fav. and more of the kind was the defign, it is natural to conclude that the expressions of it would be strong and over-bearing. It was here, the new commandment was enacted, and the law turned into love, and from hence published to set up a new kingdom to be governed by love and good will. And as this was the case, I infer that the emanations and displays were more than the disciples could well bear; and rendered them unable to take in a fet of ideas fo repugnant in nature. They were foftened, carried away, and swallowed up. An idea therefore so bad; so very full of villany and horror, could not come at their feelings.

2. We view him in Gethsemane, where we find him distressed and betrayed. His condition there presents him to us before his friends, his father, and his enemies; in situations and circumstances that cannot fail to point him out in his true character. We have him first before his friends; I mean the three disciples chosen to be with him upon this interesting occasion; and

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we have before us what they faw, and what they heard. As foon as he had withdrawn with these into this retired fpot, he began to be forrowful. He was fuch a fight, that he would trust himself only before these three, being somewhat stronger and abler to bear it than the rest. But it was too much for them, though feen only by moon light: I gather from the scope of the history, that day light would have rendered the fight insupportable: that no man could see his face and live. It was but a momentary plance that the disciples had of him; and, as I said, only by the glimmering light of the moon; and yet it was insupportable: it produced a sleep of a torpid nature, very difficult to be refifted. And as they could not endure the fight, he withdrew, even from them, as far as a person could cast a stone; which was a distance sufficient to be out of fight and hearing.

He began to be forrowful. But had he not been so till now? Yes, he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief every day and hour of his life; but compared with the present, he had never been so till now. The sight and sound of sinners, so pierced and impressed him with grief, that his features do not seem ever to have put on a smile. Yet, as I said, compared with

with the present, he had never seen a forrowful hour before. This was so extraordinary that every thing of the kind that ever had been in the world, was counted nothing: this so far exceeded, that it was the beginning.

HE began to be forrowful, fore amazed, and very heavy, are words which fill my ears with incomprehensible founds. Considering the person, the place, the time, and occasion, I know not what to fay, nor how to proceed. That he is faid now to begin to be forrowful, who never was otherwise; that he should be fore amazed, to whom nothing could be new; that he should be burdened, who could do fuch acts of might, is strange! The words are few; the passage is short; but it seems to call for more than a thousand tongues and languages to open the contents. The fense is so great; the matter so vast, and the ideas fo numerous, that it threatens to bewilder and fwallow me up. It afferts the arrival of forrow; and that till now it had not been: he began: till now he had not begun. But let us try to enter into some few particulars.

He began now to be forrowful, and therein to be the great penitent of the world; distressed, grieved, amazed, and burdened for the faults of R 2 others.

others. He is himself holy, harmless, and separate from finners, and had done nothing to cause grief; but now he stood in the place of others. and all that they did to offend is made the matter of his grief and forrow, the fame as if he had done the whole himself. In order to form our ideas aright, we must have recourse to other scriptures. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah prefents itself to the mind on the occasion. It is faid there, " That the LORD laid upon him the " iniquity of us all: made him bear our fins; " and, as worded elsewhere, made him to be fin " for us, who knew no fin: that he put him to er grief: chastised, and wounded, and bruised him: " he bore our grief and carried our forrows; and made his foul an offering for fin. And in Pf. xl. David draws out his case thus, In-" numerable evils have compassed me about: " mine iniquities have taken hold upon me: I am not able to look up: they are more than " the hair of mine head: therefore my heart " faileth me. Again, Pf. lxix. Save me, O God, of for the waters are come in unto my foul. I " fink in deep mire where there is no standing: "I am come into deep waters where the floods " overflow me. And further, Pf. xxii. I am " poured out like water, and all my bones are " out "out of joint: my heart is like wax, melted in the midst of my bowels: my strength is dried up like a potsherd: my tongue cleaveth to my jaws: thou hast brought me to the dust of death."

THESE passages place the event in a state of connection; fetting forth the forrow, the cause and impression made upon the frame. All men had finned, and all the blame of it was laid upon him, with the punishment that it deserved. The charge was fo direct and effectual, that it made him to be every thing therein, but a fin-To make him, at least to prove him, an actual finner, was the work and wish of malicious men and devils; but this was a thing impossible; for there was nothing but goodness in him: The more therefore they tampered and meddled with him, the more that goodness came out. But though there was no fin in him, yet all fin was upon him, with all its diversities and dates; past, present, and future. Behold, says John, the lamb of God, which taketh away; beareth away the fin of the world; elsewhere, the propitiation for the fins of the whole world. And in Ifa. liii. cited above, the phrazes that fet him forth as a public fufferer by appointment for others, are multiplied. It is afferted there, That he was

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wounded

wounded for our transgressions; bruised for our iniquities; made an offering for fin; that he did bear the sins and iniquities of transgressors, and interceded for them.

Now, the fins of the whole world, comprehend an idea awfully great, and an imputation of a terrible found. For it takes in all the thoughts, inclinations, words, and actions of men, from the beginning to the end of the world. There is a world of fin, not only in the duration of the world from the beginning to the end; but in every age of it: and not only in every age; but in every year of the age: and not only in every year of the age; but in every day of the year: and not only in every day of the year; but in every hour of the day: nay, there is a whole world of fin in every minute of time from the beginning to the end. There is a complicated mystery in this idea, fearful in contemplation; for there are worlds of fins turning round in each other from the beginning to the end of time, and that without number. Any calculations or estimates by a created mind are impossible: no creature therefore can be a proper fubject for this imputation. For if only numbering the fins of the world would fave mankind, he could not do it. Nay, if they were numbered

bered for him, and the fum put before him, he would not be able to tell what it was. And confequently, imputing them to him, would be imposing upon his ignorance.

BUT JESUS knew all men, and knew all that was in them; and his knowledge was unerring and perfect, and rendered information needless. He knew all the invisible man of the heart, and confequently knew the nature of the undertaking in all its connection and extent. When the father laid upon him the fins of all men, including worlds of fin turning within each other without number, he knew what was before him. The burden is immense! the thought tremendous! man, with all his ideal powers, is therein loft among incomprehensibles. Any sums or definitions of creatures will bear no proportion to the dimensions of the subject: we can only name it as we have it from God. We name the fand of the fea; but the idea, in its real fum, is known only to God. But vast and countless as the fand is, it will bear no proportion to the fins of the whole world. Yet Jesus knew the whole; and if he did not, it would have been impossible for him to undertake and engage to deliver all the offenders. He must have all the fins of men before him numerically fummed

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together:

together: he must have before him all their dates: he must have their connections and derivations: their coming on, and going off: the measure of confent or reluctance, with which they were committed: the degree of ill will therein intended against God and man: the goodness and worth of the being against whom they are committed: the obligations of men to God, together with all the circumstances by which they were aggravated or extenuated. Without knowing this perfectly, and much more, it would have been a thing impossible for him to know whether he could deliver men or not. This was the burden laid upon him, as the propitiation for our offences; and he must be fully acquainted with the evil of our condition in every point of view in which it was possible to consider it. Without this, to promife falvation would be out of his power: he could only fay, that he would try, and do the best he could for us. Any thing further would have been out of his power.

AND as the prophet Isaiah assures us, that the father laid it upon him, and imputed it to him; David in Ps. xl. assures us also, that the son admitted of the charge, and applied the sins to himself as his own. He calls them his own iniquities: says that they had taken hold of him without

without number. That is, they were beyond all the numerical names and words by which they could be declared unto men: they had compassed him about with innumerable evils.

THE father then, is cleared from all charges or suspicions of tyranny and oppression. For in this Pfalm, it is faid a little before, Sacrifice and offering thou didft not defire: my ears haft thou opened: burnt offering and fin offering haft thou not required. Then, faid I, lo I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O GoD; yea, thy law is within my heart. The time to facrifice beafts for fin was now over; and God defired it no more. Then Jesus faid, lo, I come to be the facrifice according to thy will and decree; and I delight in obeying it. And in the text cited, he fays, implicitly, here I am with all the fins of men imputed to me: they are upon me without number: have taken hold upon me, and have compassed me about with evils innumerable. They are all mine, with every thing that belongs to them: mine, and no one befide. The laying of the fins of the whole world, upon the fon by the father, therefore, was the will of the fon, as well as the father. And the will of the fon was for it full as much as the will of the father.

Lo, says he, I come to do thy will, and I delight to do it. Some object here and say, that to lay the sin and punishment of the guilty upon the innocent is unjust and cruel. But if it is the will of the father and son equally, being both the offended party, it is in them a deed altogether sull of justice, goodness, and mercy. I do not say this, for the sake of those who make the objection, but for their sake who do not. The son was as willing to have the whole imputed unto him, and to pass by the offenders, as the father; and as able to go through the work, as he was willing. And here he declares his sull consent and applies the whole to himself accordingly.

The fixty-ninth Pfalm gives us a view of the forrows, when the direct application took place. David compares them to a multitude of waters, or an affemblage of feas pouring themselves together from every direction at the same time; so that there was nothing but moving waters, in huge collections prevailing and filling every place. It may be said these are only figurative expressions, and not to be taken strictly. I grant it. And I grant farther, that some occurrences in David's life might suggest the ideas, and bring them to mind to express the troubles and dangers that he

was in at the time. But these occurrences in the life of David, which inspiration laid hold upon, she so worded as to make the language reach from David to Christ, and to make of both, but one man. The language touches David and takes hold of his case, but carries the matter beyond him to Christ, whose figure he was.

Now, make the passage a figurative expression of the forrows of CHRIST, and it will prove them to be very great. The figure is always less than the thing represented by it. For the figure is fomething great to help a person to comprehend a thing greater than itself. Even the figure itself here is very great. It is worded according to the margin thus, I fink in the mire of the abyss; and there is no standing: I am come into the abyss of the waters, and the floods have flowed over me. This appears to be an allusion to the first state of the creation, when the whole universe was in one globe. This was a globe of water: the water with its existence received a powerful motion and tendency to flow. In the then state of things, it could not find a motion to pursue a particular course toward one point more than another. Therefore, by its own activity, it would heave and fwell itself into huge mountains, and of necessity leave horrible valleys between.

between. These by their own weight would again fall, and run mountains against mountains; and by that means form others equally tremen-Thus the floods would be inceffant, and running wild in all directions; and the earth mean while lay in the centre, or abyss, in a miry state. To this, I think, the passage refers. For he fays, I fink in the mire of the abyss: I am come to the abyss of the waters, and the floods overflow me. An abyss of mire, and floods rolling over each other on the top, is an idea that does not well agree with the fea, nor with land floods; nor with any state of things fince then. For now all violent floods, not only carry away the mire before them, but tear the hardest ground, and roll the stones along. But the Pfalm refers to floods dreadfully violent, and yet the bottom was an unfathomable abysis of mire, and no flanding place any where to be found. This was the case in that first condition of creation, and no time after. It was not fo at the deluge; for then, while the earth was going down toward her original centre, the waters that had occupied that centre fince the third day, was boiling up through her cavities, and on every fide, with equal violence. The clouds cracking at the fame time, the floods from above and beneath

met. But in the beginning, the earth was an abysis of mire, situated in the depth, or abysis of that immeasureable globe of water; the action of which upon its own surface must be tremendous, which is briefly touched upon in Gen. i. ii.

Now suppose a man finking down till his feet are in this original mire. He is in a fituation horrible to contemplate. Worlds of deaths and ruin do inclose him: he is, as it were, buried a thousand times over. Now, this is referred to. as a figure of the forrows of Jesus in Gethfemane. But I may be told, as hinted above, that it is but a figure, and confequently not to be taken strictly. I, as before, say so too. It is only a fign, and confequently falls very short of It is but a femblance and the thing itself. shadow; and if the shadow is so great, what must the reality be! The whole universe, in its wild and watery, in its miry and horrible, in its fad and disconsolate state, was but a figure of the forrows of the garden! The miry abyfs; the depths and floods were but shadows; were but little or nothing compared with the pangs of forrow and depth of diffress which came over him in that awful hour. In that flate of nature, nothing presented itself to the eye but floods; nothing to be found but depths without bounds or bottom. So CHRIST in the garden neither found, nor felt any thing but forrows: huge and mighty forrows: even worlds of forrows, vast and innumerable.

His abilities to feel on the occasion is beyond our ability to comprehend. But the impressions, together with their effects, we have in Pfalm xxii. cited before, I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is melted like wax in the midft of my bowels: my ftrength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws: thou hast brought me into the dust of death. I think it cannot in reason be thought that David ever meant to have these words applied to himself in any other fense than to include him in CHRIST as the common fufferer for the fins of all men. But the application to Jesus in the garden is direct and full. For, faying, I am poured out like water; my bones out of joint; my heart melted like wax; my strength dried up, and I am in the dust of death; is the same thing as to say, My foul is exceeding forrowful, fore amazed, and very heavy, even unto death. It is the fame event; by David worded prophetically, and by Matthew historically. Sorrows then did so approach, and apply themselves to his feelings, as to unframe

the body: and the effects were mortal. Grief entered, grief invaded and pervaded the whole frame. Jesus died here within the hour, though he, so to speak, held to breathe till after noon next day. Death was the due of every sinner; death was the due of every sin; death therefore, as numerous; death as complicated; death as various as sins and sinners, entered in at every avenue. He tasted death for every man. This became visible. Death engraved all its awful features on his countenance, and therefore the scene required the dead of night and the absence of almost all men, being insupportable to the human frame.

We have thus far touched upon what was feen, and now pass to what was heard. The three disciples heard him say, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. I am among wonders, and every one exceeds the foregoing. I am here amazed and lost both at the subject, and at the language in which it is expressed. First at the subject; in itself considered, it is forrow. This was the prophecy which stood in force against him, that he must bear our grief and carry our sorrows; and here it has taken hold of him. Sorrow is the worst of all diseases, and is what gives satal weight to every other. A person

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may be in good spirits and chearful under many complaints, and it is often the case; but under this no man can. It breaks the rest, removes appetite, exhausts the strength, and unframes the man, that he is no longer himself. It renders the world, property, friends, and life worth nothing: existence itself is an offence and a burden. In a word, when grief fully enters, it makes a man worth nothing to others, or himself. But what would undo creatures, Jesus could and did bear, because with him is power.

His forrow was not superficial. My soul is forrowful, says he. It was deep: internal: had penetrated into the inward recesses of the heart: had pervaded the inward man, and taken hold of all the powers and seelings of the soul. Says the proverb of wisdom, The spirit of a man shall sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear! The soul of Jesus was seized and engrossed with sorrow.

It was also exceeding. Exceeding every thing of the kind that ever went before it: exceeding comparisons, language, and ideas. Perilupos signifies round about, or surrounding sorrow. He is sorrowful round about: it proceeded from every cause, and came from every quarter. It surrounded

his foul, and hemmed him in, and pressed him on all sides. His forrow came from every age of the world, and from every man in it: it was for every sin ever committed, and for every evil and cause of sorrow in it. His sorrow exceeded therefore all words and ideas.

AGAIN, it was unto death; even unto death. Grief was fo great and pungent, that the effects were mortal. It is certain therefore, that he would have died upon the fpot with grief, only that he prayed, and the angel was fent to strengthen him. My foul is exceeding forrowful, even unto death. This is his own judgment of his condition on the occasion. And as he said, that the forrow was unto death, even unto death, it is certain that it was fo, and the effects would have followed. What did hinder? He offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears to him, who was able to fave him from death, and was heard. Heb. v. 7. This was it that faved him; else he had died upon the spot within that hour. Sorrow would have been his death, and he feared it, for there were many things yet to take place the next day, which thereby must have fallen short of their accomplishment. And for that reason he prayed earnestly to be faved from death here, and was heard and anfwered.

fwered. This is the subject then at what I stand amazed; Jesus was forrowful; forrowful in the soul; forrowful exceedingly; forrowful, even unto death; and would have died that hour, only that he was delivered by very earnest and vehement prayers, supplications and tears.

Now let us consider and be assonished that IESUS, the fon of God, who is God over all, bleffed for ever, should put himself into such grief and forrow for us! That he should take himself the forrows belonging to the fins by which we have offended him, is wonderful, and will be for ever. What condescension! power of goodness, grace, and love! Who is like unto the LORD? Who is worthy of praise besides? How this should endear him to us, and attach us to him, and awake love and affections towards a being so infinitely kind and forgiving. What confidence we ought to have in him, and with what readiness we should obey his word. If he would do this for us, what will he not do? To do this for offenders and enemies; to do it in order to extricate them from the punishments and plagues, which they had procured by offending him: to endure so much; to do it without being asked; to do it while hindered and opposed by some, and unnoticed by others: to

do all this, and do it with patience and meekness, without one upbraiding word, is far, very far above a creature. Man in his best estate is vanity altogether: fo is every creature by a neceffity that cannot be separated from his nature: he is nothing. But he that could do this, in the manner here stated, cannot be faid to be vanity and altogether nothing. He is good; infinitely fo, and worthy to be adored. If he that hath done this, is not to be adored, who and what is to be adored? If pure and difinterested goodness, love; patience, kindness, liberality, and perfect meekness, make him who exhibits them worthy of divine honour, Jesus has made it his own. He has exercised uncreated goodness here in all its infinitude and glory. A deed more purely and perfectly good; a good deed of greater magnitude and dimensions; goodness more liberally and difinterestedly done; goodness more expensive to the doer; goodness more humbly and handfomely done, than what we have in Jesus here, cannot be named. Jesus, therefore, has a name far above every name, unto which every knee shall bow: and every tongue in the universe shall confess him LORD, to the glory of God the father. The father is glorified in a fon, whose actions are infinitely good and worthy of himfelf. S 2 ONE

- One thing more here appears, though not a pleasing, yet a very awful wonder; and that is, the evil of fin. What evil must be in it, that it could pierce, and fill, and furround the fon of Gop with forrow, even unto death! What folly in us to expect good from fuch evil; to feek joy from the deep and unfathomable fource of forrow and grief, and look for life in the only cause of death! If it made such a havoc in him. how can a frail man support himself under its direful effects! Thus far about the subject and matter of this wonderful sentence.

Bur that is not all that I wonder at. I wonder no less at the language in which it is exprefied. That proclaims the divinity of the speaker as fully as the matter contained therein. When I look at it, I wonder at the brevity that appears. That a complaint so grievous; so various and complicated in its causes; so stupendous in weight; and atttended with fuch dreadful impressions and energy of pain, should have one word, and name bestowed upon it, in the moment of agony, is marvellous!

WHEN a mortal is in agony, he bursts out and abounds with words. A fick man tells his case in many words. Jesus tells his, the most distressing that ever was, in one only. 810 C

Perilupos

Perilupos, rendered in English, exceeding forrowful, is one short word. My foul, says he. Only his foul. The heart, and foul, and body: the flesh, and bones, and limbs; the whole frame with its powers and feelings, were fully and fearfully impressed; and a mere man would have faid fo. My foul is forrowful unto death, favs he. The most forbidding and overwhelming evil. barely named, without fwelling adjectives, or aggravating amplifications. In a word, that an event of this nature should be expressed in one fingle affirmation, only once pronounced, is a matter of wonder. Now, this stile, in such a fituation, is the refult of perfect felf-poffession, power, and patience: it could proceed from nothing lefs. So little faid; fo concife and sparing; fo discreet and innocent, when every thing concurred to provoke redundance and extravagance of words, proves the divinity of the speaker.

YET I wonder also at the greatness and largeness of this sentence. So much is said that it overwhelms and confounds me. A thousand tongues and languages seem too little to handle it. My soul, says he, Good Gop! Who can measure the word, or take the dimensions of the idea! He was in the form of Gop, and thought it not robbery to be equal with him: in him

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are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: in him are all the unsearchable riches of grace and goodness; in him is all the life and light of every man that cometh into the world: and in him all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily: is both alpha and omega, containing the whole alphabet of existence in himfelf. When he therefore fays, my foul, who can enter into; who can define the idea! Who can measure the height and depth of his foul? Who can comprehend the powers, the compais, the life, the feelings, and energy of his foul! And if fuch a foul is filled and befet with forrow all around; all within, and altogether unto death; what must be the weight, the dimensions, and deadly power and energy of that forrow! Who can conceive, or take in the ideas herein conveyed and expressed!

This lays open and explains the deplorable and fearful condition of finful man: exhibits and brings to fight the evil nature of fin, and the horror, death, and damnation which is in it: the goodness of God in forbidding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: the excellency and necessity of the law of goodness and holiness: the love and grace of saving man: and the dreadful state of the damned. These, and more, this sentence more fully and clearly teaches and proves,

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than a thousand tongues and a thousand volumes. Here then I read, that he that was innocent and omnipotent suffered: if so, he suffered not for himself, but for others: and if for others, it was for us sinners: and if he suffered not for himself, but for us sinners; then we are saved: fully and perfectly saved!

Wonderful sentence! God was tempted and provoked; and it only tempted him to be God more visibly; and provoked him to speak more fententially wife and refined. What would spoil the stile of another, improved that of Jesus. Job censured his friends for criticifing on the language of one in great distress whose speech is disorderly. But the more Jesus was distressed, the more correctly and wifely he spake. This is peculiar to himself; and is altogether divine. Press and force a creature, and his infirmity will come out; and the more he is preffed, the more infirm he appears. But the more God is pressed and forced, the more divinity will appear. The more violently JESUS was hurt and bruifed, the more divinity came forth in his looks, his voice, his stile, and actions.

But why did Jesus grieve? Why so forrowful? Why would die with grief and thus lament? For sin. Its entrance into the world,

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and

and the death and damage that followed; to have his father croffed and dishonoured, and man destroyed, were evils for which he grieved, and broke his heart. He was properly and suitably affected with hatred to moral evil, and love to virtue; and lamented the dishonour done to God, and the damage done to man, full as much as the nature of the things required. The distress was adequate to the nature of good and evil; proportioned to the hatred due to sin, and love to holiness, and expressed the feelings of a mind duly and perfectly attached to God, and to man, the image of God.

Jesus therefore stood forth as the great penitent of the world; the perfect hater of sin, and lover of holiness, who abhorred iniquity and delighted in probity and justice: the great friend and lover of God and man; who grieved for every thing that took place against the glory of the one, and the happiness of the other. For this it was that he felt and said, My soul is exceeding forrowful, even unto death. This saying of his, is the root and spring of our repentance unto life eternal. From this source of godly sorrow, we derive the principle, life, and truth of the same.

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STAY reader, O flay, therefore, here, and gaze, and wonder at this fentence. Stare at every word, and pause over them. Look, and see what they are: how they stand: who spoke them: when and where! Wilt thou ask what to do? I answer, in order, admire and adore thy Gop. Come here and read the wisdom of God, and learn thine own ignorance. Come here, and hear the great penitent of the world, who had its trespasses and fins imputed unto him, and lamented them duly and fatisfactorily. Come and hear thine own fins lamented. Come and hear the forrows of thy Gop in love and good-will to thy foul, and read thy falvation concifely and correctly worded, that it may be engraved on the table of thy heart. Come here, and read and learn to be a penitent before the day of falvation and the accepted time are over and gone.

SHOULD any one think, that I bestow too much admiration and praise upon stile, and the wisdom of words, I answer, that language, in it-self considered, is nothing. But consider it as the expression and conveyance of goodness and truth from one being to another, and it will appear to be of the greatest consequence. The stile of Jesus is the natural expression of the power, patience, wisdom, goodness, and inviolable order which

which were within: consequently, it sets him forth as an object of admiration and praise; and will provoke all those that see and observe it, to honour and worship him. Creatures are weak, and their stile will partake of that: men are sinful, and their stile will partake of the weakness and disorder within, which is occasioned by it. But the stile of God will be his eternal glory, and the eternal joy of angels and men.

THE fentence under confideration, being the finest piece of language I ever faw, I admire it with joy and passion, as it shews the love and good-will of the father, in appointing fuch a linguist to be our advocate and spokesman in the court of heaven. The cause depending is great and awful, being our eternal glorification, or damnation. In fuch a cause, to provide one, who could speak so unerring, innocent, and patient; yea, infinitely neat and correct, wife and deep, in fuch a fituation as that in the garden, proves the good-will of the father, and that I shall not fail for want of one to state my case, and plead it with power. Here it is that we stand in need of an orator, who has the command of words and the power of language. Jesus is the per-He spake on all occasions as never man spake; but in the garden of Gethsemane, where feelings, and every engine of diffress screwed his feelings, and urged him to speak disorderly, his language was more pure and refined than ever. This sentence therefore assures his friends, who entrust him with their important cause, that he knows how to order his speech, and speak every word in season.

NEXT, we have him before his father in prayer. And here we have the prayer itself; the repetition of it; the agony he was in, and the interruption that attended it; in each of which he appears to be the fon of Gop. We have the prayer. The petition is, not to fuffer: at least, not the whole of what had now begun to come on. It is not absolute, but conditional. The thing prayed against is the cup, or the hour of forrow that had now commenced, and would end in death on the spot. The condition is, if it is the will of the father, and possible. This request proves, either that his present case was extraordinary, or that he was rather less than an ordinary man. Here was no external hurt or violence offered. It was only diffress of mind: and it was to be only of an hour's continuance, as appears by the place. Now, as he knew the short duration of it, if the forrow was not great, his prayer does make him a very little man. If his troubled mind was that of men in common, he is too little to be even an unitarian Saviour. If I ask the unitarian how his Saviour can save me? he will tell me, not by an atonement, but by setting before me a good example of virtue. Grant him his doctrine, and his Saviour here makes no great figure as an example. For if he had but common trouble of mind for one hour, to say that he was sore amazed, very heavy, and exceeding forrowful, even unto death; and to urge, with such importunity, if there was a possibility lest, he might escape it; is the language of a very little man: no more fit to be a Saviour by example, than by an atonement.

BUT JESUS suffered for the sins of all in sull; and his language and conduct in the garden are the natural expressions of the awful reality. He was in all the pain that the sin of the whole world could cause. He willed to avoid it, if possible, at least, as much of it as possible. To do so was perfectly natural and good. To ask to escape it, and not to make his own escape, is great: to do it with all submissive and lowly importunity, is greater still: to do so and be denied, which was partly the case, is divine: and to do so and be denied, without one murmuring word or sound, is, I had almost said, more than divine.

But to some particulars-If possible let me not drink this cup, let me not drink all these sufferings: if it can be, let it go upon this: if there is any possibility of the thing left. great, so fearful are the pains, that I crave that nothing but an impossibility may prevent the removal. All things are possible with thee. If it is therefore thy will and possible, let it end here. But if thou art not willing, except I drink it, thy will be done. Not my will, but thine be done. Thus JESUS, the fon, removes himself, and his will, and every thing out of the way of the father: submits to have his will denied, and his prayer not granted, that the father might have the place of the father, to have his fovereign will whole and entire, without lets or impediments. The prayers of men in fimilar fituations, have generally fome degrees of felf-will, and thereby their wills are in the way of Gon's will; as is visible in Lot, and other good men. But Jesus, and his will and prayer, when most earnest and importunate, are out of the father's way, and leave his will wholly free and unobstructed. When mere men are very importunate in prayer, it generally carries in it too much in found, or fense, of a wish that God may give up his will, that we may have ours done: in

great diffress especially, we would have God turn out of his way, that we may go in ours. But Jesus in extremity of pain, prays with importunity and fervour, and yet leaves the father's will perfectly free and unopposed.

HE calls God his father. My father, O my father. Abba father, are the words which fill up almost all the prayer. The father, as he is the father, had laid upon him the fins and iniquities of the whole world; had imputed the trespasses, not unto men, but unto him; had made him fin for us who knew no fin; and had made him bear our griefs and carry our forrows, and wounded, and bruiled him for us; but this did not make Jesus grow shy, or cool toward the father; nor did it abate his filial affection and reverence; but on the contrary, awakened it, and if possible gave it an increase. Had he been a mere man, it would have made him more filent and referved; but inflead of that, Jesus is more free, and owns the father more emphatically: draws nearer: cleaves closer: confesses and names him with more reverence and love. The father shall, as it were, be more a father, and he will be more a fon than before. The relation and its appellations receive an addition by what would have alienated a mere man.

We next look at the repetition. This was three times. He repaired to the same spot three times, and repeated the same words: and it looks as if he repeated them thrice, at least more than once, each time. I think that he pronounced the word, father, at least fix or seven times over. A father is the highest and best of all relations: God is the highest and best of all fathers: he is the father of CHRIST in the highest and best fense of the word: yea, here alone the relation is strictly true: And the highest and best of all things to the father and fon is, that they are father and fon to each other. Nothing is, or canbe fo great and dear to them as the relation which ties them together. For Jesus therefore to fay father, and my father, was faying the greatest thing that could be faid. It was faying every thing in one word. This found awakened all the infinite perfections of the Godhead in his favour. And as the place of the father is of all others the highest, the prayer of Jesus placed him in his own proper state of pre-eminence and dignity, where his will is free and fovereign. This word then carried in it every thing moving and argumentative. It infinuated and pleaded with force and energy not to be compared or comprehended. This prayer also puts the son in his proper

proper place. This is a state of filial subjection and obedience. Not as I will, but as thou wilt? the will of the father is the whole with the fond and to have that done is effeemed dearer than his own. He would have that done in full, without any reluctance or drawbacks. He had a natural will not to fuffer, and it was fincere and vehement; but his will to have the father's will done. was far greater and ffrongen than that The glory of the father is to be fupreme and fovereign; the glory of the fon is to be obedient and fubmiffive: the father in his fovereignty, and the fon in his obedience, are both equally glorious; and are thus never in one another's way. Sufferings also here are put in their place. Wish and will to escape; ask for it and pray; but be reconciled to fuffer upon proper confiderations. In a word, by the prayer of the garden, every person, every relation, every feeling, every idea and word, is put in its proper place and connection. This repetition also was the effect of fervour. There was more in his mind toward God and man than any word could fully express. The word father, therefore, must go up to heaven by a feven or nine-fold pronunciation. This was to give emphasis and energy of sound to the filial language toward the true parent, in his own behalf and ours. This was almost the whole of the prayer, and this re-acknowledged and confirmed the relation between the father and all mankind; for herein he speaks at the head of his brethren, and in their name. And in confequence of this, in all our addresses to God, we are exhorted and commanded to call him our father. And not only so, but always to think of him, and treat him as such.

HEREIN, our LORD kneels and falls proftrate on the ground. And fuch was the conflict; fuch the meek enery; fuch the application of all the powers of the mind to Gop, that it forced the whole frame into a bathing sweat that fell to the earth like rolling drops of blood. Whether this is intended to denote the quality or quantity of his fweat, is what I am not clear in. His fweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. So Luke words it. Whether it was the color, or the dropping down that refembled blood. I am not certain. Be that as it will, it is certain that his fweat was awful to the fight, and conveys an amazing idea: and it is equally fo, that it was his agony in prayer that occasioned it. A mere man is bad, and goes to his bed to be nursed: his pains and forrows disable him to pray for himself; and is advised therefore, to send

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for others to pray for him. But JESUS increased in prayer in proportion to the increase of pain and diffress. It was the father that had laid upon him the fins of the whole world; made him bear our griefs and carry our forrows; was now chastifing and bruifing him for the fault of others. Yet in these huge troubles; in killing griefs; in fore amazement; in mortal forrow; in agonies, bathed in fmoking fweats; he places him in all the paternal dignity, free to purfue his great ends. without opposition or reluctance. He offers up herein a facrifice of felf-denial, and filial affection to the eternal honour of the heavenly parent. Lebanon was not sufficient to burn, nor the beafts thereof fufficient for a burnt-offering; but this was fufficient; altogether fo. For hereby the father had all his glory as he is the father. The father is all paternal dignity and fovereignty; and the fon is obedience and submission in full. And their glory is equal: for as I faid before, the fon is as glorious in his obedience, as the father is in his fovereignty. The glory of the father as he is a father, is not obedience, but fovereignty: the glory of the fon, as a fon, is not fovereignty, but obedience. And wife and perfect obedience in the fon, is as much his glory, as fovereignty is in the father. And in general, He that wifely commands

mands, and he who as wifely obeys and executes that command, are equal in glory. This is the eternal foundation of government through heaven and earth; and as foon as it comes to be really understood, sin and misery will be no more. Jesus, here in a special manner, rendered perfect obedience to the father for all men to be placed to their account, and made an object of universal faith and practice. He that believeth and imitateth, shall be saved; and he that doth not, shall be damned.

Now let us look at the interruption. He had defired the three disciples to watch one hour with him, while he prayed at a distance; and also to pray for themselves: that is, to keep awake one hour, for his fake, and pray for their own fakes; but they did neither. This interrupted, and made him come to them, three times. A person perhaps might ask what need? What necessity for it, that he should leave his devotion? especially as it was of fo extraordinary a nature? It was an act of compassion. For if they had continued afleep, and opened their eyes in the midft of the armed force that was coming, and faw them with lanterns, torches, and weapons of all forts, in the dead of night; it would have been very terrifying and alarming: much more fo, than T 2 when

when awake, and in prayer to God for help and fuccour. And therefore he came again and again to awake and admonish them. But see how he conducted it, and hear what he fays. It was their fin and punishment that lay upon him; they faw his anguish: at parting he defired them to watch with him for that hour of extremity. No fooner had he turned his back, but they fell afleep, and repeated it each time: three times he comes and finds them so. Says he, What could ye not watch with me one hour? Peter, couldst not thou? Rife, watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. And as he was going back he fays to himself, The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak! He admonishes them, and pities, and excuses them! Says he, It is not their spirit, but their flesh; it is not their wills, but their weakness! Here were so many things to exhaust patience and drive a person into a rage, that if he had been a mere man, it would have been impossible for him to contain himself. Violent passions and harsh words would have escaped him in spite of all endeavours to prevent them. But inexpressible softness moves invariably in him through the whole. In a word, he fuffered for the fins of all men, and endured every thing tormenting without one hard word or found. Nothing

thing is to be heard but the voice of meekness; nothing but the sound of innocency through the whole. Matchless patience, sententious wisdom and mild energy accompany the whole, and entitle him to divine adoration.

WHAT creature could conduct himself and order his words thus in his fituation? Take even only that which is apparent to us in it; and what man could fo govern himfelf? The more a mortal is exasperated and tortured, the more foolish and hafty he is in his words and actions: but the more Jesus was hurt and injured, the milder and wifer he spoke. By afflictions and forrows even unto death, he went wifer and wifer. Not a turbulent found; not a rude speech; not a hard word; not a barbarous term; nor a disorderly sentence escapes his lips, while encumbered with worlds of forrow; and encompassed with innumerable evils! No weight of griefs; no extremity of anguish, could draw from him one ungovernable word, note than on ed or name

Moses was the meekest man in all the world. Yet when the fins of Israel pressed him hard, and lay very heavy upon him, he broke out to this effect, Numb. xi. "Why hast thou afflicted "thy servant? Why have I not found favour in thy sight? Why hast thou laid the burden

" of all this people upon me? Have I conceived " all this people? Have I begotten them? "Whence should I have flesh for this people? "Why dost thou tell me, carry them in thy " bosom as a father beareth his fucking child? "I am not able to bear them; and if thou " deal thus, kill me, I pray thee out of hand, " and let me not fee my wretchedness." And in chap. xx. he faid, "Hear now, ye rebels, must " we fetch you water out of this rock?" This, is Moles, the meekest and best of men. Great and fore diffreffes proved him to be a mere man, and no more. Moses, Job, and Elijah (bleffed be their names) in their great afflictions, called for death, and begged of Gop to take away their lives; faid that it was enough, and more than enough. Job and Jeremiah in their deep diffress and anguish, cursed the day in which they were born into a life to full of mifery Affliction when very heavy, proved these best of men, to be no more than men: they fooke and acted as fuch, and I could never mistake them for any thing higher. But in Jesus I meet with none of their infirmities. Sore amazed, exceeding forrowful, even unto death; in agony, in awful sweats, his friends asleep, his enemies going to feize him, under the fins and forrows of the whole

whole world; his conduct is marked with infinite meekness and wisdom. I adore and admire him: I admire the actions: I admire the unstudied correctness, sublimity, energy, and innocency of the language. I say, I admire and adore.

LASTLY, we have him before his enemies. and there betraved and taken. A band of foldiers with their officers, attended with the chief priefts, elders, captains of the temple, and a great multitude, with lanterns, torches, fwords and staves entered the garden, and Judas walked before, and led them to the foot where he was. Tesus advances a few steps to meet them. Seeing Judas in the front, he asked him, friend, wherefore art thou come? Immediately Judas went on toward him, and as he went faid, Hail, mafter, mafter, and kiffed him. Jesus faid in return, Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss? The foldiers and all the rest of his enemies hereupon loft all their courage and presence of mind. For they were upon the traitor's giving them this fignal, to feize Jesus and fecure him immediately. Seeing them paufe, and in confusion looking as if they had forgot what, and whom they wanted; our LORD asked them, whom seek ye? Then they recollected and faid, Jesus of Nazareth, And Jesus faid, I am. So the word is. And

as the word, I am, came out of his mouth, they all reeled back, and fell on their backs to the ground. They rise up, and appear in the same confused demur as before. They are still and motionless. He is obliged therefore to ask them again, whom feek ye? They fay, Jesus of Nazareth. Says he, I told you before that I am. They can yet neither touch him, nor move, nor speak. Peter therefore draws his sword, and cuts off the ear of Malchus; Jesus goes to him and heals him before them; rather among them. He then turned to Peter and forbad him the use of the fword, and tells him that his father would give him twelve legions of angels upon his alking him to act in his defence; but that if he did fo, the scripture could not be fulfilled; the cup, fays he, that my father gave me to drink, shall I not drink it? All this while, not a soul stirs, or opens his mouth. They let Peter come to the rank, and strike at the man's head, no doubt with a defign to cleave it, and neither of them attempts to refift, or revenge the affront. Here was a meek and inoffensive army! Peter might have gone on, cutting them down and hewing them to pieces; not a man would have heaved up a hand against him; nor give him an angry word. Had not our LORD forbad it, Peter

Peter and another apostle might have taken a fword a piece, as Simeon and Levi did, and put them every man to the sword upon the spot, as the Shechemites were.

THEY are as if they were nailed to the ground where they flood. Nobody stirs; nobody feems to know what he wanted there. They stand, they look at one another. They have nothing to do, nor to fay. They are still and mute. Then Jesus asked the priests, officers, and elders, what could induce them to come armed at midnight to take him, who was every day with them and among them in the temple? They cannot pronounce a word: their mouths are fealed.—But—fays he, Now is your hour, and the power of darkness. That word set them at liberty in a moment. They understood nothing of the sense; but yet as soon as he pronounced the word, Now is your hour, and the power of darkness, their minds and limbs were instantly all life and liberty. They were before bound, tongues, and hands, and feet; but upon Jesus faying the word, they rushed upon him forthwith and bound him, and led him away.

His divinity is here so apparent and visible to the eye that little needs be said to point it out. It is apparent in what passed between him and the

the forces that came to take him. The Jews had been at their wit's end about it, for they thought that he would engage the multitude who attended him daily, to defend him. Numbers attended, and with aftonishment faw his miracles. and heard his wisdom. They thought therefore that he was grown too formidable to be attacked in the day. But if they could come at him without this throng of admirers, they had no doubt but they could manage him himfelf. Judas comes and removes the difficulty, and engages to deliver him into their hands in the abfence of the multitude, free from all fear. He leads them into a retired garden out of the city with lights and forces of various descriptions. The priefts, elders, and captains of the temple attend, to fee that every one should act in his post as he should. They came to the spot; and, as they thought, furprifed him. Judas gave the fignal, pointing him out by faying aloud; Hail master, master, and kissing him. But as I faid, they stand still; they hold their lights; they look at each other: they look at Judas: they look at Jesus. They let them converse together. They hear Jesus fay, Judas, dost thou betray the fon of man with a kifs? This was confeffing that the fignal, according to promise, was given

given them, and that he was now betrayed and delivered into their hands.

Jesus thus owns that he was betrayed; he waits to be taken, and Judas expects them to do it. But they are dumb and motionless. Nothing is done, and they look as if they had nothing to do. The business perhaps had slipped out of their mind: or fomething ailed them. They knew that they had come to take somebody, but could not remember just that moment, who it was. At last, Jesus is obliged to ask them, who it was. That brought it to their mind-they recollect now who it was-they fay, it was Jesus of Nazareth. He answered, I am he, Greek, I AM. Upon his faying I am, they reel, they recoil, and fall flat on the ground on their backs. They are all dead men down at his feet, without a touch, or one angry word. They rife: they find themselves yet alive: they are unhurt: they are well: not one knows what ailed him that he could not stand. They are upon their legs and in their places again. Peter goes with his fword to one in the front, and cuts off his right ear, by a stroke, evidently designed to cleave his skult. Jesus forbids him to go farther, and walks to the man, and touches the place and a new ear grew instantly, instead of what he lost. Nobody Transit.

Nobody moves, or heaves a hand. They are a harmless throng: an innocent army. They are marvelloufly meek and patient. There is no fuch thing as affronting them! Take one of them out of the rank, or kill him in his place, nobody will fav any thing. Issus is obliged to ask them again their business, and whom they fought? They fay, Jesus of Nazareth. Why, strange! I have told you that I am he. Not a man yet ftirs from his place. Seeing them still as before. he expodulates with them about coming to take him with arms as a thief. One would think that that would awake them, and move them to do fomething; but they are quiet and unmoved. Divinity, and the power of preventing mercy, witheld them: the arms of grace kept them back from the deed, that they might repent, and turn back home, and escape the shuddering fin of killing the prince of life and meekness. But as no mercy, no miracles, no grace and goodness would keep them back, it was decreed that they should be set at liberty. Then said he, Now is your hour, and the power of darkness. Preventing grace did all that could be done with reasonable creatures to turn them back, and fend them home, and fave them from that deed, whose guilt is fearful in idea. But whatever the guilt, the torment

ment and damnation is, which they procured thereby, Jesus is free. More to keep men from finning, could not be done confistent with any degree of liberty. And as this fin was the greatest of any that ever was, or will be committed, more was done to prevent the commission than any other. More to fend them home penitently could not be done without force.

THE phrase, I am, is often eliptical; meaning. I am he. But that it is so sometimes, and often. does not prove that it is always to be taken for And confidering the occasion upon which it was here used, and the effect that followed, together with the evident design to prevent the greatest fin. I think it reasonable to take it in the same fense as in Exod. iv. put in the mouth of Moses to go into Egypt. Tell the sons of Israel, favs he. I AM THAT I AM. That is, I am; Pharaoh is not; enemies are not; the gods of Egypt are not; they are nothing. I exist: I alone. So here, fays Jesus, I AM; you are not. I am being; I am life; I am power; I am goodness; I am wisdom; you are nothing at all. And upon his faying I am, they went backward: and it would have been down into hell, or back into nothing if he had not upheld them. To hinder

hinder any man, or fer of men, from committing the fin that they were now about, was an act of the greatest compassion. The consequent guilt and mifery will be fo great, that horror feizes the mind; and every age and period of time and eternity will cry out murder against the authors. The authors in their torments might be ready to fay, Why did Gon fuffer us to fall into so great a fin, to bring ourselves into fuch misery? Why was not something signal and very extraordinary done to prevent it? Something remarkably expressive of his superiority. and of the disparity between him and us? Here is a provision of the kind, He tells them that he was BEING; and with mild and gentle energy fent them a few paces back, as an item for them not to come on, but to return home, and escape the evil. They hear him say that he is, the I AM, who laid his hand on Egypt, and delivered their fathers from thence; and then made them gently feel that he was the very perfon. What a fair and awful warning! What a foft and winning admonition, both to convince and to convert them; and fend them home fafe and well!

But they are stubborn and resolved that nothing should dissuade them. Therefore he speaks the the word that removed the gracious let and impediment, and fuffers them to rush fool hardy into the fin. And who can pity them. They had supposed that our LORD's safety was in the multitude, and that if they could catch him without them, they could manage him. Judas delivers him into their hands, while he was alone. But when they came, they faw and felt that they could not move a hand or foot, nor pronounce a word against him. They found that by faying I AM, he laid them all prostrate at his feet. They saw that the apostles, with their own weapons, could have put them to the fword, and leave not a man to carry tidings what was become of them. They faw that with meek and partial force he drove them a little way back, graciously teaching and advising them to return, and not proceed to their undoing. But all was in vain. Whatever damnation, therefore, they fell into, and whatever they feel, he is clear, and his name shall be adored by all the wife and upright in heaven and earth.

THE next thing wherein the divinity of CHRIST appears, is the preservation of the disciples. When the Jews said, that they sought JESUS of Nazareth, he replied, If ye seek me, let these go their way. And it is added, that this was done,

that what he had faid might be fulfilled, Of them that thou greeft me, have I loft none. In order to answer the end which the Jews had in view, which was to crush this cause in its infancy, it was as necessary to secure the disciples as to secure him. For it was well known, that his business was to be carried on by the apostles; and that they had already entered upon their ministry by preaching and public miracles. After fecuring him therefore, they should immediately have made fure of the eleven apostles. And as they found them in the garden, they knew that they had inclosed them, and had Judas to point them out and prevent a mistake. Nay, it is evident that they would have taken them, and had probably ranged themselves in a manner on purpose to prevent their escape; which induced him to fay, Let these go their way: and they obeyed his word, as the angels in heaven would have done. Yes, they obeyed him, though they evidently wanted to take them, and continued fo to do. For as foon as our LORD flood before Annas, the high prieft, he asked him immediately about his disciples: and, at Caiaphas's house, two of them, one whom he personally knew, were among his fervants, and feemingly within fight. The fervants of the high priest both Techt

both men and women and officers prefent. knew, and faid to Peter that he was one of them, and infifted upon it that it was fo. And when Peter denied it, Malehus, whose ear he had cut off faid, what fignifies denying it, did not I fee thee with him in the garden? That is to fay, I faw thee myself, and know that it is so. He might have faid more, but did not. But though enquiries had been thus made for the disciples; and though Peter was proved to be one, by Malchus, whose ear he had cut off; and John was feen in the place, personally known in the whole family; not a foul yet will take, or touch them. One might naturally expect that Malchus would instantly have fled at the fight of Peter, and would have taken him by the collar, and faid, this is that bold villain that drew his fword upon us, and was like to kill me in the garden. One would think that they would have fecured him and John in a moment, and informed the court that two of his disciples had been aken in the house. Not a hand moves against them; not so much as to drive them from the fire-fide.

Suppose now, that one had called Malchus, and the officers aside and asked them, have you secured his disciples? No. Why so? We can-

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not tell. How do they intend to proceed in the business? We know no more than that it is faid. that they defign to crucify him; and that he is to be crucified between two thieves. This is what is faid. That will be doing next to nothing. The two thieves, if left alive, can contribute; nothing to further his name and cause when he is dead. But the eleven apostles may do much; yea, may do every thing. He has openly given them a commission to preach and work miracles, and be afraid of nothing. They have already begun, and travelled, and have given specimen of their boldness and intrepidity. These men that he has chosen are active and resolute peoble; not brought up to be idle, but accustomed to endure toil, and face dangers from their infancy. These may do more to spread his doctrine than he could have done in his own perfon. Crucify him, therefore, between the eleven apostles, and I will say something to it; but to crucify him between two thieves, is doing nothing. A couple of thieves are not formidable agents in his interest, but these apostles are very much fo. Will you go and fecure these two by the fire-fide? No. Why fo? do you not wish to have them taken up? Very much. Well, and why do you not do it? We cannot tell.

In a word, the apostles were in their hands; and some of them were with them, and among them hither and thither: they wished earnessly to take them; and yet they neither would, nor could touch them; and I dare say, knew neither why nor wherefore. Jesus had only said, let these go their way, and they let them go, and come, and do as they would: they could no more touch them, than the lions could touch Daniel while among them all night in the den: and seemingly knew no more why, than the lions did. This proves Jesus to be the great I AM. The God of Israel was here, and no one but himself could have conducted the matter in this manner.

But there is one thing in the garden that proves him God more than all these circumfrances insisted on: I had almost said, more evidently than all that ever he did. I mean what passed between him and Judas. In persidy and villany; and in ingenuity to compass it, Ahitophel was but a shadow of him. All things considered, he was the worst man that the universe ever had, or ever will see: nay, I have sometimes thought, that he was, and will be deemed, the basest and cruelest of all the creatures of God. He presented himself now in the garden to perpetrate the greatest sin that ever was committed; and conducted it with circum-

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ftances

stances of treachery and perfidy that exceeded every thing that ever was heard of before or fince. Men and devils feem to me to be outdone by Judas that day. So much perhaps in one person never met together to provoke and exasperate. Just before he came, our LORD said. Rife, lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand; and instantly he appears in fight. When he had advanced a few paces, and came near enough to be spoken to, he says, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then, without answering, he steps forward, and affectionately cries, Hail, mafter, mafter, and lovingly embraced and kiffed him: and then, no doubt, turns and looks with an item to the murderers to feize and fecure him. Says our LORD, Judas, dost thou betray the son of man with a kiss? In order to say this, and in this manner, on fuch an occasion, two things are necessary to be in the speaker. First, he must be infinite in power, and, fecondly, he must be infinite in meekness and gentleness. Nothing less could enable any one here to be free from violence. He that betrayeth me is at hand: Friend. wherefore art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the son of man with a kiss? is all that dropped from his holy lips; and every word is a miracle: a stupendous miracle, emphatically declarative of eternal

eternal Godhead and power. On this world as yet the words have made but little impression, but on the other worlds I believe the effects must be great.

THE holy angels, doubtless attended and watched. Judas every step of the way from the place whence he fet out to the garden, in awful fuspence. They must be faying inwardly, "Will "he go all the way? Will his limbs carry him " to the place? Will he be able to present " himself there? Will he be able to stand before " him? And if his feet can carry him there; " how shall he be received? What will our "Gop fay to him? What fort of words shall "we hear? What epithets and names will he " give him? What fort of pronunciation will " found in our ears? Shall we not find the " elements convulsed and nature tremble?" But when they faw him move on, containing in himfelf all the perfidy of earth and hell; conducting the business of devils and wicked men: when they heard the voice of the dissembler: when they faw the treacherous and murderous kils on the one hand, and on the other, the mild looks of Jesus: when they heard his words, how few, how meek, and moderate! how kind and gentle! how harmless and U 3 innocent!

innocent! What must they say? What must they feel! I am ready fometimes to think that it must have produced a revolution in the third heaven itself. Neither earth, nor hell; neither wicked men, nor devils could have done the bufiness of the hour. Judas alone had in him every thing bad and base enough to accomplish it. And if he had not done it, it feems to me that it had not been done. And did he not hurt Judas? No. He neither hurt, nor called him out of his name; nor pronounced a hard word against him; nor threatened, nor frowned upon him! Therefore God now appears in a new light: angels are new creatures: and heaven must proceed upon a new scale! yea, must be a new heaven! Hell also must have received a shock. It was the hour and power of darkness. Judas was the king of earth and hell, and men and devils that day were all his fubjects. And when he appeared, the devils might expect, at least hope, to hear our LORD exclaim, and break out into violence: nay, they might hope to fee him stamp and call him by all the names that defined his character. But to fee the mildness of his features, and hear the innocency of his language, must have made awful impressions, and funk the bottomless pit itself down deeper in desinnoconni

pair and gloom. In a word, heaven was more a heaven, and hell was more a hell in confequence.

A WORD or two relating to myself. Had it not been for Judas, I should never have known that I had a Saviour so innocent and able. He that did not hurt Judas, will not hurt me: he that could spare him, can spare me: he that could speak so softly to him, is a speaker whom I wish to hear for ever. The beauty, energy; and innocency of his language will procure him my adoration, and fill me with eternal joy. O Judas, thou hast betrayed Jesus unto the Jews; and unto me: haft betrayed him into their hands to be crucified, and into mine to be adored: and by thy help. I adore, as heartily as they crucified. Thou hast betrayed his goodness to the whole universe: thou hast extorted out of him what heaven, earth, and hell could not have done. By felling him for thirty pieces of filver, thou hast bought me treasures of grace, and procured for him thirty thousand praises and adorations. Thou haft revealed GoD in his power, glory, and love more than all the angels in heaven could have done. My faith is stronger, and my mind is bolder owing to thee. By being the worst and unworthieft of all creatures, thou haft made

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GoD

Gop shine above all imagination. Finally, in the garden the divinity of Jesus is heard, and feen, and felt, by friends and foes; by power and meekness; by words and deeds, before Gop and men. Adieu Gethsemane, garden of wonders ! 12. We have I sus at the bar before feveral judges, Jews and Gentiles, civil and ecclefiaftical, as recorded in Mat. xxvi. xxvii. Mark xiv. xv. Luke xxiii. xxiii. and John xviii. xix. chapters. THEN the bands and officers of the Jews 15 took Tesus and bound him, and led him to 44 Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caia-" phas, which was high prieft that fame year. "The high priest then asked Jesus of his dis-"ciples and of his doctrine. And Jesus anse swered him, I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the fynagogues and in the tem-" ple whither the Jews always refort; and in " fecret have I faid nothing. Why askest thou "me? ask them who heard me what I have faid unto them: behold they know what I " faid. And when he had thus spoken, one of " the officers which flood by, ftruck [ESUS with the palm of his hand, faying, answerest thou " the high priest so? Jesus answered him, if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? Therefore

Gos

" Annas

"Annas fent him bound unto Caiaphas the high prieft, where the fcribes and elders were affembled.

"AND the chief priefts and elders and all the " council fought falle witness against lesus to " put him to death, but found none: yea, though " many false witnesses came, yet found they none. " For many bare falle witness against him, but " their witness agreed not together. And at last " there came two that bare false witness against " him, faying, We heard him fay, I will destroy "this temple that is made with hands, and " within three days I will build another made " without hands. But neither fo did their wit-" ness agree together. The high priest arose and " faid unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What " is it which these witness against thee? But " Jesus held his peace. And the high priest " faid unto him, I adjure thee, by the living "Gop, that thou tell us, whether thou be " CHRIST, the fon of God, the fon of the " bleffed? And JEsus said, thou hast said-I " am .- I further fay unto you, hereafter ye shall " fee the fon of man fitting on the right hand " of the power of God, and coming in the " clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent " his clothes, faying, He hath spoken blasphemy! cc what

"what further need have we of witnesses? behold now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, he is guilty of death. Then the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and did spit in his face: and when they had blindsolded him and covered his face, they buffetted him, and smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

"AND as foon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests and the scribes came together and led him into their council, faying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go.—Hereaster shall the son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, what need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

"AND straightway the chief priests held a con"fultation with the elders, and scribes, and the
"whole Sanhedrim, and binding Jesus, the whole
"multitude

" multitude of them led him to the hall of " judgment and delivered him unto Pilate: and " Tesus flood before the governor. And it was " early, and they themselves went not into the " judgment hall left they should be defiled. " Pilate then went out unto them and faid. "What accusation bring you against this man? "They answered and said unto him, If he were " not a malefactor, we would not have delivered " him up unto thee. Then faid he unto them, "Take ye him and judge him according to your " law. The Jews therefore faid unto him, It is " not lawful for us to put any man to death;that the faying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should " die.-We have found this fellow perverting the " nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæfar, " faying, that he himself is a CHRIST, a te king.

"THEN Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and faid unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered my kingdom

et kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom " were of this world, then would my fervants " fight that I should not be delivered to the " Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. "Pilate therefore faid unto him, Art thou a king "then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I, " am a king. To this end was I born, and for " this cause came I into the world, that I should, " bear witness unto the truth: every one that is, " of the truth, heareth my voice. Pilate faith " unto him, What is truth? And when he " had faid this, he went out unto the Jews, " and faith, I find in him no fault at all. And " when he was accused of many things by the " chief priests and the elders, he answered nothing. "Then faith Pilate unto him, hearest thou not, " how many things they witness against thee? "And he answered him to never a word; inso-" much that the governor marvelled greatly. " Now at that feaft, the governor was wont to " release unto the people a prisoner, whomsoever " they defired. And they had then a notable " prisoner, named Barabbas, a robber, who lay " bound with them that had made infurrection " with him in the city, who had committed " murder in the infurrection. And the multitude " erying aloud, began to defire him to do unto . " them

them as he had ever done. Therefore when " they were gathered together, Pilate faid unto "them, Ye have a custom that I should release " unto you one at the paffover. Whom will ye " that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus " which is called CHRIST? For he knew that " for envy they had delivered him. But the " chief priefts and the elders perfuaded the mul-" titude that they should ask Barabbas, and de-" ftroy Jesus. The governor answered and said " unto them, Whither of the twain will ye that " I release unto you? They said Barabbas. " Pilate faith unto them, What shall I do then " with JESUS which is called CHRIST? They " all faid unto him, Let him be crucified. And " Pilate answered and faid again unto them, "What then shall I do unto him whom ve " call the king of the Jews? will ye that I re-" leafe unto you the king of the Jews? And " they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pi-" late faid unto them, Why? what evil hath he " done? And they cried out the more exceed-" ingly, Crucify him; and were the more fierce, ac faying, He stirreth up the people, teaching " throughout all Jewry beginning from Galilee " to this place.

"WHEN Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked " whether the man were a Galilean? And as " foon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's " jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who him-" felf was also at Jerusalem at the time. And " when Herod faw Jesus, he was exceeding " glad: for he was defirous to fee him of a " long feafon; because he had heard many things " of him, and hoped to have feen a miracle "done by him. Then he questioned with him " in many words; but he answered him nothing. "And the chief priefts and scribes stood and ve-" hemently accused him, And Herod with his " men of war fet him at nought, and mocked thim, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and " fent him again to Pilate. And the fame " day Pilate and Herod were made friends toee gether; for before they were at enmity between " themselves.

"AND Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and elders of the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing "worthy

"worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him and release him. For of necessity he must release one unto them at the second of the second

" the feast. And they cried out all at once,

" faying, Away with this man, and release unto

" us Barabbas.

"AND while he fat upon the judgment feat his wife fent unto him, faying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have fuffered many things this day in a dream because of him. Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them: but they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why? what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and the voices of them, and of the chief priests prevailed.

"THEN therefore Pilate took Jesus and foourged him. And the foldiers led him away into the hall called Pretorium, and called together the whole band. And they platted a crown of thorns and put it on his head: and they put on a purple robe, and a reed in his right hand. And they bowed the knee and began

" to falute him and mock him, faving, Hail, king of the Jews. And they spit upon him. " and took the reed and smote him on the head. " Pilate therefore went forth again, and faith unto " them, Behold, I bring him forth unto you, " that ye may know that I find no fault in him. "Then came Jesus forth wearing the crown " of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate " faith unto them, Behold the man. When the " chief priefts therefore and officers faw him, they cried " out, faying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate " faith unto them, Take ye him and crucify " him, for I find no fault in him. The Jews " answered, We have a law, and by our law he " ought to die, because he made himself the son " of Gop.

"When Pilate therefore heard that faying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the judgment hall, and faith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then faith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that deilivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin.

"And

"And from thenceforth Pilate faught to release him. But the Jews cried out faying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. "Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and it was about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king. But they cried out, Away with him, away with him; crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered,

"We have no king but Cæfar. "WHEN Pilate faw that he could prevail no-" thing but that rather a tumult was made, he " took water and washed his hands before the " multitude, faying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then an-" fwered all the people and faid, His blood be on " us, and on our children. And Pilate willing " to content the people, gave fentence that it " should be as they required. And he released " unto them Barabbas, him that for fedition and " murder was cast into prison, whom they de-" fired: but delivered Jesus to their will to be " crucified." X THIS

THIS awful event is the most difficult to be historically arranged of any that I ever met with. Not owing to the writers, but to the nature of the event itself. So much violence was never offered to nature, and all her principles as here. Reason and truth were laid aside, and all was conducted by unnatural force. Rage and malice were let loofe, and confequently the whole scene ran on wild, without fense or order. Neither of the Evangelists was directed to settle the arrangement of the facts, but each took what stood in fome special connection with the other parts of his narrative, which is their general method. The facts in their order and feries were, I think, as above stated, wherein we have Jesus in the first place before Annas. For John xviii. fays, that they led him to Annas first. Annas and Caiaphas, his fon-in-law, were both high priefts at the fame time. The father-in-law feemingly had the precedency, and therefore he was first taken to him.

THE revelation of divinity here is visible, by
the silence and confusion into which the court
was thrown, by our Lord saying a few words.
Annas asked of his disciples and doctrine. Jesus
answered, I spake openly to the world: I ever
taught in the synagogues, and in the temple,
whither

based act on a

whither the Jews always refort; and in fecret have I faid nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them that heard me what I have faid unto them: behold they know what I faid. Herein. with decent boldness and liberty, he tells his faithless judge, that there was no propriety in examining him, nor necessity for it. What I faid, fays he, was always faid in the most public places and manner. Behold, fays he, pointing to the people then present, these know what I said, ask them. Hereupon, not a man at court could answer, ask, or add one word more. The judge feemingly loft the power of recollection and Our LORD referred him to a great fpeech. number of witnesses before him who had repeatedly heard him preach. His friends and domestics were there; his officers and inferior priests, and many befide who had been often ear witnesses of what our LORD had said; but either he could not recollect or not pronounce their names. His mind could not conceive, his mouth could not frame a fentence, true or falfe, to cenfure, fearch, or blame his prisoner. He could not call for help, nor could any body open his mouth to offer it him, and propose himself an evidence. Nobody could ask, or answer, yes or no. No counsellor appears to open the cause; no orator

is to be heard. Here is a dumb judge, a speechless court, and a silent prosecution!

Ar last a military man is moved at the ill treatment of the judge. The officer observes the shame and embarrassment which he betrayed, and pities him. I suppose that himself was in pain as well as all the rest. He gives our LORD a rude and insolent blow, and savs, Answerest thou the high priest so? Here our LORD afferted his right: mildly, and yet manfully affirmed his innocency, foftly touching upon the irregularity of the proceedings. Says he, If I have spoken evil, bear witness to that evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? Meaning, I did not speak before I was called upon, and when called upon, only referred the judge to the proper evidences, who are on the spot. And this every prisoner has a right to do. Courts refer to witnesses for or against, and I have done no more. If in this, or in any thing elfe, I have spoken evil, be an evidence, and propose thyself as such against me. for that is the business of this place; but if thou canst not do that, why dost thou smite me? Here he filenced and confounded the officer, and therein called upon the court to proceed against him according to law. But this threw the whole again into a dumb state. They were

at a stand, and not an individual could find a word more to say. His speaking here with some degree of boldness and freedom, the energy of which was more than they could bear, was wise and gracious.

IT was in order to instruct them that his being bound and led there, was a voluntary act of submission and condescension on his part; and a merciful item for them not to proceed, feeing that they were all so absolutely in his power, and at his disposal. It was compassionately telling them; be inftructed and prevailed upon to defift and let me go, and fave yourselves from this fearful fin, the effects of which will be altogether insupportable to you. But though they were wholly filenced and at a stand, they would not let him go, but they will try another court. John xviii. 24. Annas, therefore, fent him bound to Caiaphas. So this verse ought to be read. That is, Jesus had filenced and put the whole court to pain and fhame, and therefore he fent him, bound just as he was, to Caiaphas, and turned the bufiness over to him, glad to be rid of it.

THE fecond view we have of Jesus is before Caiaphas. He finding what had happened at the other court, asked our Lord himself at his appearance, no questions, but applied in good ear-

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nest to gather evidences together. He succeeded and procured plenty. What was wanting was. to have two or three people that could upon oath fay, that at fuch a time, and in fuch a place, they heard him fay, that he was CHRIST the fon of God, that they might condemn him at their ecclesiastical court as a blasphemer. This was the nature and defign of their bufiness. But it should seem that confusion and haste made them hire the people to be false witness in form. and charged them not to tell the truth. In confequence of this, every witness thought that he had no more to do than to take care that what he faid was not true. And therefore, they fware and countersware one another, till they had wearied out the whole. One fware that he faid this, and the other sware no, but it was that. They faid and unfaid, and afferted fuch fenfeless contradictions that nobody knew what he faid, nor what he heard. At last the court was worn out and obliged to confess, that these were no witnesses of any fort, true or false. For it is said, that though many false witnesses came, yet found they none; because what was said was so foolish, far off and foreign, that it would amount to no evidence either true or false, good or bad. Here the business again seems to be going down to-

ward nothing and filence, as before. But the court is defired to be composed and easy. Here are two men present, that will fet all to rights. and give relief in the present embarrassment. The first appears Mark xiv. 54. and swears, We heard him fay, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another, made without hands. The other appears Mat. xxvi. 61. and fays, I will take my oath upon it that he did not fay, I will do it: but I heard him fay, I am able to destroy the temple of Gop, and to build it in three days. And thus their witness did not agree together, nor did it tally with the defign of the court. If they had faid that they had heard him fay, or preach, that God was his father, and that he was his fon, it would have been true, and would have been all that the court wanted. But no man could ask the witnesses to fay so, either as a truth or falsehood; and if they could, no man could have remembered it, though they had heard him times without number. They could ask for any thing, and every thing but this. This their mouths could not pronounce, though it was the whole of the business. This alone they wanted to have faid, and yet they could ask no man to fay it. They had paid a great number of peo-

X 4

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ple for appearing to fay what was defired; but. as I faid, nobody could ask the only question relating to the business, though it was but one. But they fallied out into a number of fenfeless interrogatories, and charged, and hurried, and fweated one another, till all the stories, and the business, and themselves, were spent and brought to nothing. Caiaphas began to fear and feel his infirmity coming on, finking him, with the whole court, into the same condition as that of Annas. He begins to fail in speech: he cannot ask any more questions, nor call more witnesses. Says he therefore to our LORD, Hearest thou not? what is it which these witness against thee? What indeed! they could not tell themselves. Answerest thou nothing, fays he? Nothing. Jesus held his peace for there was nothing to be anfwered.

THE fatigued and pitiful state of the court, and the superior looks and sublime silence of Jesus, silled the high priest with rage and anguish; and finding the cause dying away under his hands, he addresses him and says, I adjure there by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the son of God, the blessed one? This they had heard him preach and affert in the most formal and open manner:

had followed and watched him from place to place: had disputed and quarrelled with him before many witnesses for afferting it. Yet not one was to be found, or hired for money, that could fay that he was ever heard to fay any thing of the kind. He had preached and affirmed it till he had enraged almost the whole nation against him for fo doing; yet neither themselves, nor any one else could fay it. The two last witnesses afferted incorrectly and falfely what he had faid at his first public passover, but left out that which was to the present purpose. They said they heard him fay, he would destroy the temple and build it again; but they could not fay, we heard him affert that the temple was his father's house. That would have been true, and to the purpose. Yet no man could remember, or pronounce the words. The high priest shall have leave and liberty to ask him himself, whether he was the fon of GoD; but shall have no power to propose the question to any one beside. Annas had fpoken, as if he was afraid of the subject. He asked him of his doctrine. This was unintelligibly general and far off. He could not tell him, You have with blaspheming affurance called yourself the son of God, and here are many witnesses who can prove it against you.

would

would have been fome fort of fense in this, though wicked. But he is out and about, and a great way off, talking as if there was fomething about a doctrine in the case; and could not say, one word more about it. Caiaphas therefore is all heat and hurry to collect evidences: they fummon: they fend: they swear one another not to tell the truth, till at last they could neither speak nor hear, either truth or lies. All that they knew for certain was, that there was neither truth nor fense in any thing that was faid. He therefore is obliged to apply to our Lord himfelf, and ask him, to turn evidence against himself, without which they could not proceed to condemn him. They could not find out the blafphemy, and therefore they charge him in the name of Gop to blaspheme in their hearing that they might put him to death for it. By the living God, fays Caiaphas, I adjure thee. He finds fome symptoms of his father-in-law's disorder coming on, and therefore he feems to arm himfelf against it with rage and noise; he storms, and raves, and ftrains his lungs in delivering the charge.

This is as full of fense as what went beat fore. He and all the rest affirmed that our LORD was an ally of the chief of the devils, in a scheme

were going to put him to death as such. Was there sense then in supposing, that an ally of the chief of the devils, would be induced to tell the truth for God's sake, especially against his own life? Make him the worst of men, and charge him to tell the truth by the best of motives! He rayes, and scolds, and calls for truth and sincerity from a man, in whom, he says, there is none!

OUR LORD, feeing that nothing would work upon them, to make them desist and save themfelves from the fin, fettled the point for thems Thou askest whether I am the fon of God, I answer, Thou hast said it-I am. I further say unto you, hereafter you shall see the son of man fitting on the right hand of the power of Gop. and coming in the clouds of heaven. That is, that you might have it in full, I add this to fave you further trouble. Hereupon the high priest in pious agony rent his clothes; declared the blasphemy; afferted it sufficiently proved without further witness; and called for the sense of the court: and he is declared worthy of death. Then they mocked him; spit in his face; blindfolded him and fmote him with the palms of their hands, faying, Prophecy, thou CHRIST, who

fmote

fmote thee? And many other things blasphemoully spake they against him. And this abuse concluded the awful business of this court. O deluded, unhappy people!

But while iniquity and folly were fallying out with extravagance on all fides; while malice, avarice, perjury, hafte, and hubbub were spending themselves; where was Jesus? I answer, he was in himself: was at home in his own divinity; familiar with himself: conversant with his own meekness and innocency; delighting himself with the view of his own power and mercy, and in full possession of that which made him glorious to himself from all eternity. Had a mere man been here, he could not have stood it one hour.

FOLLY having exhausted all her strength at this second court, was not yet satisfied with her own doings, and therefore Jesus was led to a third, Luke xxii. 66, 71. Though some of the eccle-staftics attended, this was the Sanhedrim, the highest secular court of the Jews, composed of seventy men of rank, called elders, and masters of Israel. These are embarrassed on account of what happened on the two preceding occasions. The examination here is very short indeed. Art thou the Christ? tell us. This sounds as if

the flock of words was fmall, or elfe that they were afraid to use them. But I take it that they had no power to fay one word more than this, and could fay this only to himfelf. pears that they would fain fay, Art thou the CHRIST, the fon of God? But the power of speech would then reach no further. The answer is full and pointed. If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go. That is, if I tell you, you will not believe, as is evident by the court of Caiaphas: and if I ask you a question, you will not answer me, which is plain by the court of Annas; for your defign is the same as theirs. Though I tell you who I am, as I did them; and though you feel the inability to speak what you would, which is enough to convince you, and induce you to defift, and let me go; though you thus fee and feel that you are nothing, and can fay nothing, but what I think fit; yet you will stubbornly and perversely go on, and will not be faved from this great evil. And as you will not be perfuaded to spare yourselves, take it as follows. Hereafter you shall see the son of man fit on the right hand of the power of God. They faid, Art thou then the fon of God? He said, Ye say that I am. Then they said, as people

people helped out of diffresting circumfrances What need we any further witness? for we ourfelves have heard of his own mouth. proves that they had been under anxiety, and at their wit's end for witnesses, which they could not procure, and knew not how to trust them, if they could. But now they are happily delivered from the necessity and perplexity they laboured under. Here, dishonesty and presumption were at work to an amazing degree. They knew the confusion and shameful disorder and embarraffment of the other two courts, and knew that they felt the same impediment entangling them, and yet they proceed fool-hardy in the same course, in defiance of justice and common fense.

Thus the ecclefiastical and secular court make it evident to the whole world, that they could furnish themselves with nothing, even upon their own principles against him, but what he was pleased to grant them out of his own mouth, by an act of condescension and meekness. They could not think their own thoughts, nor put two ideas together, though wholly set upon the business, but as he allowed them. When they wished and meant one thing, they said and did the contrary. They wished and meant to have people

people to fwear that he had called himself the fon of Gon; but they made them fwear in fact that he had not. Thus he confounded them, in order if possible to spare them a deed, the commission of which would make it better they had never been born. Some may ask, why then did he not continue the difability till the moment was over? Why did he not render the hindrance effectual? I answer, because if men will persist in a resolution to fin and nothing but an absolute annihilation of liberty shall hinder them, they must not be hindered. He did use a little temporary force, but he did not continue it, because that was used only to fave them, and not himfelf: if he had continued it absolutely, it would have faved him, but not them. Being kept from the act by continued compulsion would not have freed them from the charge and guilt; but if they had improved the impediment to defift of themselves, it would have faved them from a degree and species of punishment and damnation, which they could no other way procure for themselves: and, with which compared, all others are but small. Since they persisted, he gave them liberty and help to do it. Doing ill or well, procuring damnation or falvation, is the refult of liberty; without which human actions are neither good nor evil. IN

In the fourth place, we have lesus before Pilate. The ecclefiastic and secular courts consult and agree to deliver him to the pagan civil court. And Jesus stood before the governor. And it feems that not a word passed between them, for the fight aftonished him. Such the innocency, fuch the meekness of his appearance, that instead of faying any thing to the prisoner, he went out to the Jews, and asked them, what accusation bring you against this man? This was evidently fpoke with some very meaning features and accents, conveying ideas to this effect, Accusation! Is he to be accused of goodness and good sense! Is he to be accused of honesty; of innocency; of fimplicity, and wisdom? If so, there seems to be fufficient evidence in his face to condemn him! Such a fight my eyes never beheld! He is the perfect picture of all justice, probity, meekness, and integrity! Thus, or to this effect. His appearance had melted Pilate down like wax before the fire, and transformed him both infide and out. The Jews are therefore ruffled and alarmed: they infolently answered, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Which reply proves that they were in a rage. Not with what he faid, for that agreed with their defign; but with the manner of faying it. His manner

manner of faying it, the fight of his face, and found of his voice reproached them with delivering up a man to be tried for his life, whose very appearance was sufficient to clear him before any court. Therefore they were in a rage, and insisted upon it that he was a criminal, and was for that reason, and that only, delivered up unto him. Which was the same as to say, we see, we see, by your appearance, an extravagant partiality; and what innocency you seem to discover in him, and what little reason we have to expect justice at your hands. But we tell you, that if he had not been one of the worst of men, we would not have troubled you.

Why then, says he, take ye him, and judge him by your law. That is, take him, try him, condemn him by your law; for I am very certain that it can never be done by any law of mine. The very sight of him disables me, and assures me that it is needless; that to hear accusations is idle; for his looks will confute a thousand evidences. They reply with indignation that the power was not in their hand. This they said in rage and vengeance only, because they assured this whenever they pleased. Now they disclaim it, because they want to throw this business into the hand of Pilate.

Y They

They tell him therefore, that the power was not in their hands but in his, that this he knew as well as they; and that they expected him to exert it on this necessary occasion. They intimate that they could fee plain enough, his partiality and pre-possessed notions of the innocency of the most notorious criminal. But be it known to him, that they expected a punishment suitable to the case before him. Thus the fight of JESUS had struck and amazed Pilate, and had in a degree transformed him; and in a manner incapacitated him to act regularly, either as a good or a bad man: the fight of Pilate had affected the Jews, and filled them with fear and rage; to that they cry out and give up all that which they yet claimed as their undoubted right; and which they had always tenaciously maintained at all hazards: and all this was, in order to get Jesus crucified, which their own law would not allow. But though they meant this only to gratify revenge, our LORD over-ruled their rage, to chuse the death which he had chosen for himself. The meekness of Jesus had so far unsteeled Pilate, and melted his cruel mind into a degree of humanity and tenderness that he was utterly unwilling and averse to the bufiness. He is wholly indisposed at first, say what they would to impress

cusation, and his features and looks flung it back in their faces undesignedly. The wisdom and probity, the mildness and moderation he had seen, stamped the idea and certainty of his goodness, that he could not bring himself to think that the case required hearing. The sight had made such engravings on his mind, of his artless ingenuity, that it was impossible to suspect any evil intentions or actions. Yea the appearance seemed to be enough to extort an oath from all by-standers that he was innocent and honest.

THE Jews seeing this, begin to bestir themselves and say, We have sound this sellow, meaning, whom you think to be so very innocent, perverting the nation! forbidding the tribute to Cæsar! and, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king! Upon this Pilate is prevailed on to enter into something of an examination. He re-enters the hall, where he had been lest, and asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus replied, Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Here Pilate began to sin in the affair. Our Lord had made a revelation of himself that was altogether full of divine energy and authority, so as to leave no room nor reason of doubt upon his mind, but that the whole affair was

Y 2

malice

malice and ill-will. Our LORD appeals to that by asking, savest thou that of thyself? Is it to remove any doubts of thine own? Have I left thee under any uneasy apprehensions on this head? This he could not in conscience fav. Divinity unknown, Godhead in disguise had put on his innocent, honest, and harmless features, and looked him in the face with irrelistible force and persuasion. Want of further conviction then he cannot pretend to. On the other hand, to own that he did it in tame compliance with malice and bloody views, his guilt and shame would not let him. The question therefore, though worded foftly, came too close. He was already guilty, and confequently it hurt him, and made him fly in a rage. With violence and rude emphasis he asks, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priefts have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? O governor! why didst thou enter into a needless examination, knowing it to be needless? Thou mightest tell me, what was I to do? I answer, save thyself from fin and hell: fall down and adore, and beg a fentence of remission of sin, and upon thy knees piously swear that thou wouldest be one with him in life and death. This would have fnatched thee from the gates of hell, and put thee down with

with the highest worthies of the world: ages would have resounded the praise of thy wisdom, and realms of glory would have received thee shouting. The condescensions towards thee carried in them this kind design and appearance.

IESUS then answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world. then would my fervants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate replied, Art thou a king then? Jesus faid, Thou haft faid that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice. Pilate faith, What is truth? And then out he goes .- O blundering pagan! This was the worst haste that any one ever made. Heaven had deigned to give him a condescending piece of information of the greatest importance: his maker mildly and courteously told him the nature and origin of his kingdom: told him how he came into the world. and upon what business; to wit, to declare himfelf king of heaven, and confequently of the whole universe: the most necessary of all truths to be known: the most excellent, with which none was worthy to be compared. A truth in short, worth

Y 3

every

every thing. To know the eternal king, from whom we have every thing to hope, or every thing to fear, is the whole. But he is not out of his blundering rage yet, and therefore, what is truth? fays he, and away he goes, without his answer. Every one, says Jesus, who is of the truth heareth me. This was a fair challenge. both mild and most condescending. It was implicitly faying, beware what thou doft; hear patiently, coolly, and critically; ask me questions, and know who is before thee, and what to be about. He asks what is truth? not for information, but as a thing that nobody knew, and not worth talking about. Truth was nothing to him; for he is out of humour, and in hafte to bring the business to an end. Heaven attempted to make him her convert, first by a species of filence and looks marvelloufly innocent and winning; fecondly by words patiently, courteoufly, and condescendingly expressed. A finer morning, a fairer bidding for a crown of glory, of a peculiar lustre, no man ever had. But he knew not his day, nor the things which belonged to peace and honour.

He goes out however, and fays, I find no fault at all in him. If so, where does this place himself? If it is no fort of fault in Jesus

to fay, that he was the fon of God, and the king of the other world, and that all true and upright people believed it when they heard him. and embraced him as fuch; it was a very great fault and folly in Pilate not to adore him, and pay homage. He now brings lesus and the accusers face to face. The chief priests and elders accuse him of many things. Our LORD made no reply: the charges were many and great, and nothing faid to invalidate them. Bringing them face to face was probably an expedient to extricate himself out of his embarrassed situation: guilt would not fuffer him to condemn; and fear of the Jews would not let him acquit the prifoner. He brought them together therefore, in hope to get himself off that way. He saw the despicable appearance of the accusers, and the fenfeleffness of the charges: he saw the superior looks of our LORD, and the maffy fense and wisdom visible in his features; and knew that he could confound them in a moment. But to his great furprise and disappointment he made no reply. Hearest thou not, says he, how many things they witness against thee? But Jesus answers him to never a word: fo that he marvelled greatly. He was greatly aftonished and amazed. There would have been no wonder in the case,

if

if he did not clearly see with what ease he could have defended himself and stopped their mouths. I suppose that this disappointment exasperated him, and helped him to harden himself against Jesus, because he saw that he would not defend himself when he knew that it was in his power to do it with ease; that as he would not act for himself, which he saw he could do, he would not do much for him neither: let him take the consequence of his own neglect, which in his ignorance he might endeavour to think, he deserved.

However he thinks of another expedient to try to get out of the difficulty. He sees his situation: to condemn an innocent man would expose him to danger from the court of Rome; and to acquit him would enrage the Jews: acting the honest, or dishonest man, therefore, equally exposed him to danger. He is consequently at his wit's end how to steer a middle course free from it on both sides. He had been always used to release one of the criminals left for execution to the multitude. This seems to be an infamous scheme of Pilate to secure himself a party in the mob. He put it in their power to rescue from due punishment one of the worst of men every year. Thus the mob every passover put some of

the greatest enemies of mankind and common honesty out of the reach of the law. Pilate resolves if possible to get them to chuse Tesus as their released criminal. He had a notorious criminal in prison, who was so infamous and odious to all the public, that he thought that nobody would, or could ask for his release. I am inclined to think that he first proposed Jesus himself: but upon his being rejected, he paired him with Barabbas, and limited their choice to one of these two, thinking it next to impossible to chuse Barabbas, because of the public rage against him. He said to the priests and elders, I find no fault at all in him, but you have a custom to have one prisoner released at the passover: will ve that I release I sus, who is called CHRIST, the king of the Jews? for he knew that for envy they delivered him up. Pilate feems by this to infinuate, that I esus claimed this title in fo harmless a fense that he was willing enough to allow it him: that it feemed to him to fignify nothing more than his fuperior mind, wisdom, virtue, innocency, and felf-command; and all about another world, and that they were full of envy because he so far excelled in those talents, and was their fuperior. Seeing that there is no other crime, Will ye that I release the king of the Jews?

Jews? That ignominious release will sufficiently humble and difgrace him: will leave him under a mark and memorial of dishonour while he lives: will be fure to ruin his popularity, that he will never be deemed a superior, to move your jealousy and envy any more: and in fact, that is all the core and gall of your mind; and as this will remove that, and make all easy, let me do it, and let it end there. As it will blot his character and ruin his public credit and popularity, it will equally answer your end and mine, in every point of view. This was a plaufible and artful scheme, in which he might perhaps mean some fort of pity toward Jesus, but much more toward himself. And if it would not excite pity, he might mean to exasperate them against him and provoke them to crucify him, that himself might be out of danger. And in truth this feems to be his real wish.

THE multitude prefently came about him, and cried aloud for the release of a prisoner, according to custom. He puts Jesus and Barabbas, whom I have mentioned above, and limits their choice to one of them. Which of the two, says he, will ye that I release, Barabbas or Jesus called Christ? The chief priests and elders influenced the multitude to ask Barabbas and destroy

JESUS.

TESUS. Again the governor asked, Which of the two will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate willing to release Jesus, faith, What shall I do then with Jesus called CHRIST? They all faid, Let him be crucified. And Pilate faid again, What shall I do unto him, whom ye call the king of the Jews? Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews? They, feeing Pilate thus naming his title, and in a manner forcing them to do the fame, nay, faying, that in fact, they had done it already, to wit, by envying him, were desperately enraged; and vehemently cried out, Crucify him. Pilate faid, Why, what evil hath he done? Then they cried out more exceedingly fierce, faying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean? And finding he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was then in the city.

In the fifth place, therefore, we have Jesus before Herod. Herod was glad, having had a great defire to fee him for a long time. He asked him a number of questions, proposed and re-proposed, differently worded and urged all manner of ways, but could not get a word in an-

fwer:

fwer: no, nor even a look that he could understand. Every method of examination was equally vain and ineffectual. And therefore, he fent him back to Pilate, after abusing him, in a mock royal robe, with yet affurance of his innocency. For Pilate afferts that he appeared innocent to Herod as well as to himself. This treatment differs widely from every thing before and after it. He answered, more or less, all his other enemies; but upon him he bestowed never a word, for nor against any thing. This was the greatest flight. He spoke to all the others what might prevent and fave them; but it is plain that there was no defign nor defire to fave Herod, in any fense or degree: he had so sinned, that his repentance was not defired; for he had finned unto death, for which there was neither facrifice nor intercession. If any asks, whether his case was absolutely remediless, I answer, I believe that it was absolutely so. And it became so in this manner. He had so finned against Gop in the person of John the baptist, that his salvation became unattainable without the confent and cooperation of John. If Herod, after he abused John, and put him in prison; and after he had fully refolved to put him to death; yea, after he promised his head to Herodias, had fully and heartily

heartily repented, and reverfed the fentence, and range and humbled himself to John, and prevailed upon him to forgive him first, and then pray for him, that God would forgive him too: in that case, he might have been faved, and glorified in heaven. But after John was dead, his falvation was impossible: it was fo, even though he had not himself put him to death. He had wilfully rose up against a messenger of God, in the discharge of his office, which he knew, and therefore his falvation could not take place without the confent and interference of the injured fervant of heaven. And this is the general rule, as appears in the case of Job. For when his three friends had done him a material injury, while in a violent combat with the devil for the honour of God; though they did it unawares, without any evil defign, and were good men themselves, yet they were fent to humble themselves to Job first, without whose prayers and interference in their favour, no faith nor application of theirs would avail them any thing at all. God would not forgive them unless requested by Job. Much less would he look at this wicked Herod when he had mal-treated one of the very best of his servants. And further, Herod could not be faved, for if God had pardoned him, he had made the presence

presence of John an insupportable sight to himself. When he heard of Jesus, his guilty mind suggested that it was John risen from the dead, which terrised him. He dreaded being in the same world with him, and therefore, to be in heaven with John could be no heaven.

But it may be faid, if we follow this reasoning, we shall affirm that none of the persecutors, who put the faints to death could, or can, be faved. I answer that it does not follow, because those persecutors, in ignorance and unbelief, put good men to death under some fort of notion of their being bad men. He that perfecutes and puts to death a true fervant of God, knowing him to be fuch, cannot be faved, because the man by whose means alone it can be brought about is put out of the way. And this was Herod's case. He knew and confessed that John was a just man, and holy, and yet persecuted and imprisoned him for croffing his will: that alone rendered his falvation unattainable by any other means than John's good-will and prayer in his behalf. John must in this case be the first to pardon, and upon his asking for him, God would do the same. This is the course that he has ordained to vindicate and honour his faithful fervants, when thus injured in the discharge of their

their duty: and every good and wife mafter will act fomewhat fimilar thereto. By this equitable and wife rule, Herod was necessarily cut off from the hope of falvation. And beside, he had fold to a girl, for a dance, half his kingdom, or the life of John, which she was pleased to chuse. This had made him too despicable a fool ever to appear in heaven, or to have his name enrolled among penitents, who forfake fin, because they wifely fee the evil of it, and their danger by it. Therefore, our LORD treated Herod with the greatest slight that ever was put upon a man. He reckoned it too great a favour for him to hear the found of his gracious voice, in the pronunciation of one fingle word. His words and voice were worth more than a thousand worlds, and were heard with adoration by millions; and therefore not to be bestowed upon the ears of fuch a wicked fool. He had been exceedingly defirous to fee him for a long time, and now is happy, and vastly obliged to Pilate for the opportunity: and, he had the ignorance and vanity to expect that our LORD would indulge him with idle miracles, and fome sketches and fpecimen of his wisdom, to amuse him, much in the fame manner as the girl's dancing had done. Thou fenseless fool, was there not some reason

reason to dread a miracle! If any should be wrought, was it not natural to conclude that the very first would fall with death upon thy guilty pate! Dread, rather, any exertion of supernatural power, lest it should be to turn thee into a pillar of fire. To conclude this digression, Herod had irreversibly fixed the state of John in glory, and himself in damnation by the same deed, and therefore nothing is said, or done here to save him, or show him common respect. Consequently Jesus was sent back after much abuse, and, as I said, strange to tell, with testimonies of his innocency!

In the fixth place, we have Jesus again before Pilate. He fets him before the Jews, and folemnly and formally declares, that the trial was over: he afferts that the accusers had had full liberty to make good their charge, and had entirely failed: he had himself examined him, and found him entirely innocent: Herod had examined him and afferted the same. He had undergone all manner of examinations, and every thing searched out with all possible scrutiny, and his character remained absolutely unblemished. Says he, I find no fault at all in him; no, nor Herod; no, nor can you prove what you say: you have failed in every point. Well, and what then?

then? Why, acquit him, and declare his innot cency by proclamation from the bar. No. fays he. I find no fault at all in him, and therefore I will chaftife him, and release him, and let him go! No court, nor evidence, nor law, nor equity, by any manner of examination can raise in any mind one doubt about his entire innocency. You have examined him; Herod has examined him; and I have done the same: every advantage has been granted you to prove his guilt, and all that has been faid and done, have fully established the contrary. There is nothing faulty and culpable in fense or found, can be proved against him. Therefore I will chastise him and release him! O heaven, how couldest thou hear him without thundering? He folemnly declares him wholly innocent, and therefore he will publickly fcourge and then release him in disgrace as a guilty culprit! To this appeal and affirmation of his innocency the Jews could not reply, nor offer a confutation; and therefore cry out in a transport of rage, Away with him, and release unto us Barabbas.

WHILE the matter was in this stage, and Pilate just going to give his consent to the sentence of crucifixion against his conscience, and open declaration; his wife sent to him a purposed messenger with a

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folemn request not to proceed, in any instance whatever against the righteous person brought before him; with an awful protest that she had undergone in her fleep that morning on his account diffresses and sufferings of an alarming defcription. It was not a little that would, or could have prevailed upon a woman to fend fuch a meffage to a judge upon the tribunal, in a public manner. She was carried on and bore down by divine impressions from lesus, in compassion, to prevent his finning. O heaven, how indulgent to this pagan judge! How kind and powerful the helps afforded against his staggering mind, just going to yield to the dishonest motion! But all the effect it produced was, that it increased his reluctance to crucify him, and made him again rccoil from the deed, and renew his application to have him only chastised and released, as a malefactor. This was rejected as before. He renewed his application and faid the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I find no fault in him: none at all. I will castise him, and let him go. O dissembler! affert and proclaim his innocency, and yet chastise him, and release him by an act that implied and afferted him guilty. But this however had no effect, for the Jews with growing rage and noise demanded

his crucifixion; and being willing to content them he complied.

PILATE therefore took JESUS and scourged him. And the foldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium, and called together the whole band, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it upon his head: and they put on him a purple robe and a reed in his right hand; and they bowed the knee, and beginning to mock him, faid, Hail, king of the Jews! and they fpit upon him, and took the reed and fmote him upon the head. Pilate therefore went forth again, and faith unto them, Behold I bring him forth unto you that you may know that I find no fault in him. Wonderful! Is this cruel treatment, contrary to the laws of every country under heaven, intended to prove him without fault? If Jesus is without fault, where does this place Pilate! Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge at all? If Jesus has no fault at all in him, Pilate has no probity nor honesty at all. Then Jesus came forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe; and Pilate faith, Behold the man!

IT appears that Pilate was fole author of this abuse and inhumanity; and had it been done in deliberate moments would have been unpardon-

Z 2

able;

able; but he did it in a tumult of guilt and fear, hardly knowing what to be at. He dreaded the wrath of the Jews too much to act boldly according to conscience as said above. He was also in dread of the court of Rome, if he put any man to death without proof of guilt. And he was under the checks and gnawings of his own conscience. He probably therefore treated our LORD in this barbarous manner, with a defign to work pity in the Jews, to induce them to be fatisfied without having him crucified. I also suspect, as said before, that he was in a rage with our LORD, for not answering for himself, and stopping their mouths, which he plainly faw he could do any moment, which would have faved him the necessity of being an honest man, where it was for hazardous to be for He feems to reason with himself to this effect—It is in his power to extricate both himself and me, and he will not do it. Why, then, let him take the consequence, as far as is consistent with my own fafety. Something of this might influence his mind, and harden him to do what he did. And his delivering him up to the foldiers naturally conveys such an idea. Therefore, though this was a stratagem to save the life of Jesus, yet it appears that the real defign was much more to

fave himself from the danger that he was it. But consider his conduct here, in what light we will, it is bad to a great degree; even if there had been no more than proofs of the common innocency of a mere man falfely accused: but confidering how much he faw; how much was done in his favour; what helps he had, and how aftonished and impressed he evidently was; his conduct here puts him down as one of the bafeft of men. And though every thing is faid in his, favour that could be faid, yet put the second Pfalm, and the prayer of the apostles in Acts the fourth chapter together, and it will appear that in truth, Pilate had with the rest set himself in a rage against Jesus: nor could he have acted as he did, if it had not been fo.

WHEN JESUS appeared, behold the man, fays he; meaning, fee how I have treated him to please you. Behold him and be satisfied; that is, without his death, for without proofs of guilt that may endanger me. But how could he himself behold him? Crowned with thorns; clad with derision; clothed with his own blood; desiled with spitting, and surrounded with mockers! And all this not only by his connivance, but appointment! When the Jews saw Jesus, they cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith,

Z 3

Take

Take ye him and crucify him; for I find no fault in him. Thou dishonest man, if so, why dost thou advise them to put him to death? The deed is too full of horror and danger for thee to do thyself; but thou wilt help them to do it: yea, wilt alienate the rights of Cæfar, and wilt lend it to malicious men to put an innocent man to death. He is afraid to commit the murder himself, but will give them leave to do it, while he declares the accused wholly innocent. The Jews infift upon his putting him to death, for that by the Jewish law he ought to die, because he made himself the son of Gop. Here is rectitude and straight forward work on both fides! Pilate declares folemnly that by the Roman law he is wholly innocent, but the Jews shall take him and crucify him, which was the harshest punishment of the Roman law, which yet declared him blamelefs! The Jews declare that he had offended against their law, and therefore, that he must be punished by the Roman, that he had not transgressed!

But hearing that Jesus made himself the son of God, made him more asraid. This is a confession that the sight of Jesus had put him in fear, and confirms what is said above of the impressions made upon his mind. He had nearly

ftifled

stifled all; but this renews the whole in his mind. He directly flies back into the hall, where Jesus was left alone: he asks him, Whence art thou? IESUS answers him not. This increases his agitation and alarm. He pretends to be furprifed that he would not answer him, knowing that he had power to crucify or release him. Our LORD replied, Thou couldest have no power against me at all, except it were given to thee from above. This was an indirect answer, deep and awful, and yet it was an answer in full. The question was, Whence art thou? answer me, for I have power. The answer is, I know it: I know whence it is, that it is from above: I know how it came to be against me; for whose fake, and by whose means thou comest to have power to act against me. In plain words, I am from above, and have fufficiently convinced thee, if thou wouldest be convinced, that none of you have any power to act against me, but what I give you. I convinced the Jews that they could neither act, nor move, nor speak, nor think against me, unless I gave them leave. Their fin in delivering me to thee is greater and more fool-hardy than any thing that preceded it. Thou hast also felt the truth of this. I know thy power and the condition on which it is granted

to act against me. I know that I have graciously with-held you, that you might escape and save yourselves, if you would. I know all the fins of this day, and who is greatest, or least in acting them. This and more is in the answer obvious to natural and easy reflections, because he represents himself herein as one to whom divine decrees and appointments were familiar, and all human actions fully known.

PILATE thenceforth was more desirous to have him released. But the Jews seeing him impressed and carried away again were alarmed, and cried out, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar. When Pilate heard that, he sat in the judgment seat in a place called Gabbatha, and saith unto the Jews, Behold your king. But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. He saith, Shall I crucify your king? They said, We have no king but Cæsar.

SEEING that he could not prevail, and that they grew tumultuous, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it: they said, His blood be on us, and on our children. And Plate, willing to content the peo-

ple, gave fentence that it should be as they required: and he released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus to their will.

The text above is so large, and comprehends such a quantity of matter, and variety of particulars, that I could not fully comment without making the discourse too long. All therefore that I have endeavoured to do is, to point out some distinguishing feature of each event, where the divinity of Jesus is peculiarly apparent. Indeed it shines through the whole; but yet some turns strike the mind and its faculties with more peculiar and impressive energy. It may set the subject in a more advantageous point of view, if we subjoin here, John xiv. 30. Hereaster I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.

This gives the author, origin and end of the event; and consequently opens the nature of it. It was an experiment to be made upon Jesus, by the devil in his highest capacity. He was therein to exert himself, not as prince of the devils, and the world below only, but as prince and head of all the princes and rulers of this world also. He had been at the same work from the day of his baptism to that time; and the matter seemed often to have been settled

that he was Gop. But was again as often feemingly called in question, and contradicted. And it arose from this, that our LORD had two boints to prove and demonstrate to the world. First, that he absolutely was God by nature. Secondly, that by a temporary habit, he was man: man in the habit and condition of men on earth, in every thing but fin. Sometimes therefore, he was nothing but omnipotent Godhead before their eyes; and again by and by he was nothing but feemingly a mere man. He appeared as incontestibly and undoubtedly the one as the other. This puzzled and confounded both men and devils. The devil therefore now refolved to bring it to a point. He will gather together all that earth and hell can do to grate upon and irritate the feelings; to screw and force out of him what is within. And will know whether he is a mere man, and to be impressed as such. He had tried angels, and Adam and Eve, in their primitive state: he had afterwards tried the temperance of Noah, the faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the meekness of Moses, and the wifdom of Solomon; and found them all to be creatures, and discovered in them that, of which he made his advantage. He is now refolved to make a final effort with regard to Jesus, that fhall

shall settle the point, either for, or against

HE fummoned therefore, and united all his forces in this world and that below, to arm and co-operate. He called together the temple, and the fynagogue; the fenate and tribunals of Jews and Gentiles; the kings and rulers and people rose together at his call, with rage and resolution against one man, in one morning, to know whether he was a mere man, or any thing higher. All the fraud and falsehood; injustice and dishonesty; treachery and cruelty, to be found or invented in earth and hell, were to be exerted against him to try him. And had he been a mere man as we are, he would have discovered himself to be such, either by absence of mind, want of power, want of patience, or fymptoms of violence and rage; in other words, want of meekness on the occasion.

THE prince of this world advanced a fystem of crimes against him, committed against God and man: against the church and state, both Jewish and Gentile. This was to be accompanied with every insult and affront that could grate upon the mind, and that could screw and torture the feelings to force him, if possible, into impatience; while he watched for the symptoms.

One boisterous word, one sierce look, or a distorted feature, would have settled the matter to his fatisfaction, and victory would have declared itself in his favour.

BUT JESUS, when brought to the courts, by his fedate prefence, few words, but mostly by fublime filence, bound and fettered all that were present; or filenced them, and turned their speeches backward against themselves; and continued the impediments that they might fee and. defift; but when they would not draw back, he would give them leave to proceed, just in the manner, and to the degree that he thought proper. It was only because they would not spare and fave themselves, that he gave them leave to go on. They did accordingly arraign and accuse him of fins against God and man. Pilate is made the head and final judge of the profecution. He, and Herod, and the Jews, were all very defirous and willing to find him guilty.

But let us hear the cruel and bloody judge. He fays, that they brought him to the tribunal, charged with great crimes, and that he had allowed them every advantage to prove the charge. But after all, he declares, that their accusations, not only failed, but positively justified and acquitted him. Says he, Touching the things whereof

whereof you accuse him, I find in him no fault at all. He adds, that he had also examined him, even before them, and that that had proved him wholly without blame. That Herod had examined him before them, while they had liberty, and every thing on their fide to accuse him, and yet the refult had been the fame. vain to try any more, for that the very attempt and endeavour to criminate, positively and irrefistibly justified him, and proved his innocency. And whereas Jesus had confessed to Pilate that good confession, that he was CHRIST the anointed, the fon of God and king of the Jews; Pilate fays that he was without any fault at all. That is the same as to say, that his calling himself CHRIST; saying that he was the son of God, and the king of the Jews, was no fault in him at all. And Pilate himself calls him the CHRIST. the king of the Jews, repeatedly: yea, affirms to their faces before Jesus, that they faid fo too. That is, their accufations and all their conduct proclaimed and afferted it. This he neither willed nor liked, any more than they; yea hated it as much as themselves. He, and all the prosecutors would have given a world for one crime proved against him; but the accusations reverted and fell back upon the accusers. Every thing they they faid and did made them look fo much the worse, and he so much the better. Their affertions returned, and engraved themselves upon the looks and features of the false accusers, and criminated them visibly to the bodily eyes. This vexed and fatigued Pilate, and accounts for his irrational and consounded conduct. The sight at first amazed and melted him down in a surprize before he had had time to harden himself. The effects of this, with his rage and resolution to resist convictions, make him appear in the most inconsistent point of view.

In a word, Jesus must be, and was justified by all his implacable and malicious profecutors and enemies, before he was condemned. Judas first justified him and declared him innocent. Annas justified him and fent him away without one crime proved, or laid to his charge. Caiaphas justified him. The Sanhedrim justified him. Herod justified him. The wife of Pilate justified him. And Pilate, the chief justice and supreme judge on the trial, declares from the tribunal that they all justified him, and that he himself did the fame. He pronounced him holy altogether, and declared him to be CHRIST, the king of the Jews, and that he was absolutely blameless: and insifts upon it that the Jews knew the fame, and that their

their accusations and conduct amounted to a demonstration of it.

Now about the final verdict and fentence of crucifixion. The Iews defire Pilate to crucify him. Pilate fays no, I will not do it, do you take him and crucify him. They fay that they would not, for that they had no power; and yet, as I faid, they did put to death whenever they pleased without leave or acknowledgement. They fay now that they had no power: but the truth is, that they did not chuse, rather say, they could not do it, and therefore they tell Pilate, thou shalt do it, for we cannot. No, says he, but you shall do it; I will have nothing to do with it. Well, but fay they, we have no power, for we have no law nor leave. Well, but fays Pilate, I give you leave and liberty: take him and crucify him. Nay, but we do insist upon thy doing it, or elfe we declare thee an enemy to Cæfar. Then he calls for water and washes his hands before them all, and declares, that Jesus was just, and that he therefore justified him, and that the fentence of crucifixion he was going to pronounce against him, was not his, but theirs. Thus Pilate fays, that the sentence of death was not his, but the Jews; and the Jews fay no, that it was not theirs, but his.

Tesus therefore was accused and condemned; and put to death by Jews and Gentiles, in cooperation with the devils. And they shall be all charged and punished for the barbarity and bloody murder they committed. And yet it is true that they neither accused, nor condemned, nor crucified him. They truly did and truly did not: and the one as true as the other. It is true, that they did positively and vehemently accuse and condemn him unto death. And it is as true, that they missed him; yea, justified him; and therefore accused, convicted, and proved themfelves guilty. And as to the fentence of crucifixion, not one of them could by any means, or upon any terms be made willing to acknowledge it as his own. The priefts, and elders, and all the Jews declare that it is not theirs. And Pilate as folemnly and peremptorily afferts that it is not his. Why then it is nobody's.

But what ailed them all? Were they not willing to accuse, and put him to death? Earnestly and eagerly so. But the ancient of days; the Elshadai of Abraham; the great Elohim of Israel, and inhabitant of the high and holy place, was upon his trial. All the confederacy of devils and wicked men had tempted him to the trial, and presumed to examine. We are assured

that envy and rage, violence and malice, governed the profecutors. What would and should then be opposed to this on such an occasion? I anfwer, meekness. Meekness in degrees and visibility as yet without a parallel. Meekness therefore looked at them in his eyes, and feated itself in his features before them: it showed its glory and shed itself all around. He was a mirror, a theatre, and a miracle of mild and harmless wisdom and power. Worlds of meekness and innocency flood visible in him, and met them face to face. Had the men been willing, I had almost faid, half willing, it would have converted them. But as they were incurably stubborn and determined to perfift at all events, the fight drove them to rave without bounds. The devil had inspired them with rage himself; but this increased it to fuch a degree, that the confusion, contradiction and uproar, ran wild and extravagant beyond all example. And indeed as it did not foften, it would naturally enrage them. For the fulness of Godhead and divinity, which fat upon his face, and looked forth in his eyes, rolled back all the filth and falsehood which they threw at him, and fastened it upon them. The more fierce and hostile they looked at him, the more meek and good natured he looked at them. This racked

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and distracted them. Their violence and his mildness, therefore, mutually provoked and increased each other, till they were a mass of boiling rage and vengeance, and he more than a world of meekness and kindness to the fight. And thus the prince of this world came and found nothing but that which gave him a wound that shall never be healed.

4. WE have Jesus on the cross. And this is the last situation in which I design to view him. A few of the particulars attending this shall be pointed out, wherein he appears above a mere man and nothing less than God. Let us begin with what occurred in the way to Calvary, while he carried his cross. In Luke xxiii, we find, that a great company of people, both men and women followed him, who bewailed and lamented him. This great company does not feem to be his enemies; but people that in general were ignorant and unconverted, but were moved with pity. "But Jesus turning unto them, faid, Daugh-" ters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for " yourselves, and for your children; for the days " are coming in the which they shall fay, Blessed " are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, " and the paps that never gave fuck. Then shall ye " begin to fay to the mountains fall on us, and "to the hills cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in thedry?"

This procession was the most affecting that ever appeared to the human eye. The cruel marks of violence and abuse which he carried, and the loud triumphs, infulting shouts, and mixed uproar of innumerable throngs, melted down these people who accompanied him into pity and tears. And had he been a man, he would have accepted it, and if able to speak, would have thanked them for their sympathy and fellow feeling. And he would have been apt to accompany it with some delineating language to mark out the cruelty of his enemies. But Jesus was above man, and therefore did not. He refused their compassion, and defired them to bestow it upon themselves and their children. This he did, not in rage and impatience; not in rude contempt; nor in stern fullenness; but softness and condescension; with mild benignity and superiority of mind, becoming divinity. He affures them that fearful judgments and calamities were approaching, which would overtake them and their children, and which they could neither escape nor endure with patience and fortitude: that fuch would be the consternation and terror,

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that they would call upon the hills and mountains to fall upon them, and end their fears and miseries: that as to himself, he was in the fiery trial like a green tree, which would put out the fire and survive it; but they would be like dry trees which would increase it: that the difference between him and them, was so great, as made all the pity due to them, and not to him; and therefore he pitied them and compassionately warned them that they might be prepared, and find either supports or escapes.

Tesus then amidst his blood and wounds, and injuries; and amidst the shouts and triumphs of his enemies; and under the crofs, in his way to Calvary, refused pity, and defired the mourners to mourn for themselves, and lament their own danger. There are two things which do not belong to him who is God by nature; that is, to accept of pity, and return thanks. Returning thanks cannot belong to him, because all are indebted to him, and he is indebted to none. Pity on the other hand he cannot receive; because he is in no pain or distress, but by condescension and his own choice, for some great ends: and is every moment infinitely superior to all enemies and attacks. We never, therefore, find Jesus, either returning thanks or receiving pity.

pitý. He ever acted here as by nature above both. He thanked none but his father; he would receive homage, but no pity.

Bur had he been a man and refused the pity offered in his then fituation, his conduct would have been unjustifiable, and could have originated in nothing less than pride and contempt. But if he, who carried his cross, amidst the horrid acclamations and shouts of enemies in triumph, was God, it became him to decline it, and to fignify the impropriety of applying it to him, and to mention the need they and their children had of it. Also to foretell the calamity they would be in, and the pitiful figure they would make under it, and the necessity of penitential tears in order to prevent its fatal effects. But had he been a man as they were, and yet compared himself to a green tree, that would put out the fire, and them to dry flicks, that would increase it; it would have been rude and affronting, proud and arrogant beyond the worst of men. We are bound then, to make him who faid this, either God, or the worst of men: if a mere man, he was rude and arrogant; but if God, by nature, it was wife and great; becoming divinity in the fublimity of his ways with men.

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THE next particular is that which occurred at the place of crucifixion, recorded in Luke xxiii. 33, 34. "And when they were come to the "place called Calvary, also Golgotha, or place of a "foull, there they crucified him. Then faid Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what "they do." When it is faid there they crucified him, we must understand, that there, and then, the crucifying act began to take place; which was nailing him to the cross. Then, said Jesus, Father, forgive them. This is a prayer of Jesus, wherein is to be considered, the request made; the persons for whom; the place where; the time when; the person to whom, and the plea urged.

FIRST, the request or prayer itself. This is forgiveness. This, in the inspired definition of it, signifies not imputing sin to the offender; not reckoning that he has done it: imputing righteousness, goodness, and holiness to him which he has not done; forbearing punishment and treating him with peace and favour, as if he had altogether acted worthily. This is the prayer of Jesus on this occasion.

THE next thing to be confidered is the persons for whom. Those were his crucifiers. All of these; the most criminal and the least: all orders of them, and here, immediately, them only.

only. Herod I except. The request was, that not one of them might be hurt, or be a sufferer by any thing as from God, nor be blamed for any thing done to him: that not one should lose his conversion, or acceptance with God, for what they had done or should do that morning: that if any, or all of them repented, that they might be as gladly and joyfully received, as cordially loved, and as fully glorisied, as if they never had a hand in what they were now doing.

NEXT let us remember the place where. Calvary, called the place of a fcull. This was the place fixed upon for him to feel the weight of their hands, and receive every injury that enmity and ill will could invent and inflict. This was the spot chosen for him to receive the uttermost that inhumanity could dictate, or impose. From here also they meant to transmit his name with infamy and difgrace through all the ages of time. Here they had appointed to fet him forth, and fet him up a spectacle of public shame, terror, and torments to all worlds. No spot ever contained and held to view fo many things to put a person out of temper; to extort curses and drive him raving. Here Jesus prayed and brought bleffings, grace, mercy, peace, and pardon down to the ground.

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AGAIN, we have the time when he prayed. It was when they crucified him: when they nailed him to the cross; then he said, Father, forgive them. In the place where, and at the time when, they crucified him: while under the action of the piercing nails, the merciless hammer, and under the feet of rude and infulting triumph: then, then, he faid, Father, forgive. That is, father, do not hurt, do not touch one of them. Let not one suffer damage for what is done. Let not this necessitate the damnation of any one of them. Do not be angry; do not punish them: bear, pity, and excuse them all: and if any, or all of them repent, receive them freely; comfort them effectually, and love them heartily and for ever. Do not blame them, nor remember what they have done this awful morning.

But it may be asked, why he did not stay a little longer before he offered up this prayer? Would it not be better at the end than here? I suppose that it was high time. The crucifiers were now, in all likelihood, in imminent danger of instantaneous ruin from the interference of the sather. When the Israelites had abused a chain of miracles, and hardened themselves to go on in sin; God said to Moses, let me alone that I may

may destroy them in a moment. Then Moses prayed, that he would forgive, which was done. But the provoking fins here are infinitely more exasperating than those of their fathers. The chain of miracles which they had feen and heard of; the appearance he made on his trial, and the impediments and items given them to defift and let him go; fwelled their offence with prefumption beyond example. And after all to go on to nail him to the crofs, was finning with that kind of affurance, as would have placed them in damnation immediately. True, it is not faid; yet all things confidered, it is natural to conclude that matters flood thus. I think it is faid, that their method was to lay the cross on the ground, and nailed the person before it was erected. Confidering things thus, when I contemplate the scene: when I, as it were, stand and behold the harmless lamb of God, with inoffenfive looks and paffive limbs upon the ground, under their injurious knees and pawing hands: when I fee the fearful nails and look at the hammer a going, with energy of human spite and hate, aided by devils, driving them through his hands and feet, into the wood: when I fee them all rage and triumphant cruelty and malignity; and fee him growing milder by their violence,

lence, till he was nothing but pain and meekness to his fingers ends. When I say, I contemplate this, I think it natural to conclude, that the father was going to interpose, and desired the son to let him take them in the very presumptuous deed which they were so wantonly perpetrating.

HERE the crucifiers would have been taken in the very act, murdering their God with wanton triumph. An oath in wrath would have declared their crime unpardonable, and probably would have placed them to a man alive in hell. But IESUS instantly spoke, and said, Father, say nothing to them: let not one of them be a sufferer, nor be the worse off for any thing done this day. Let pardon overflow and undo the whole. If all, or any one of them repents, let nothing done be remembered, nor hinder thee to receive fuch into thy favour and cordial love: receive them as heartily, comfort them as tenderly, and glorify them as fully, as if they had not done it. And let them go on and finish what they are doing without wrath or danger from thee. Whatever fins they may commit before the end of the day, connive at and forbear. Be mild and kind for my fake. Hereupon just and awful vengeance melted into mildness and wrath into peace! In a moment

ment, grace overflowed and all the fin was drowned and out of fight! Who could remember any thing but the love and mildness of Jesus? The fight and sound filled up the father with joy and delight that there was no room for any thing else, nor time to think of it!

Now we come to the plea urged in their behalf, they know not what they do. But were they ignorant? How could it be fo? Had they not hired perjurers to swear against his life? Had they not resisted the evidence of miracles? Had they not withstood proofs of innocency and declarations of it from every quarter? Had not every thing been done to perswade them to desist? Had they not forced their way to crucify him by the violation of law and humanity? They had and knew they were going on with violence against reason, justice, and convictions.

YET there was a point of ignorance within them which governed all their actions. The apostle, Acts iii. 17. says, that they put to death the prince of life, through ignorance; they, and their rulers. And Paul says of the princes of the world, 1. Cor. ii. 8. That if they had known, they would not have crucified the LORD of glory. The point of ignorance was this,

They did not know that Gop was man. This. and this alone was the truth, which they neither knew, nor would know. Impatience and rage against it, would not fuffer them to hear any thing that was faid or done to prove it. They had before fought to stone Jesus, and would have stoned him to death instantly if they could. because he said that God was his father, thereby making himself equal with Gop. John v. And again, we stone thee, because that thou being a man, makest thyself Gop. This was the ignorance that involved them in all this fin, and made them rave and boil with rage and vengeance against him, that they thought no death could be bad and afflicting enough for fuch an enemy to the divine nature. So positive were they, that God was not a man, and consequently that the man IESUS could not be his fon, that no mode of reasoning, nor means of conviction, could fo much as engage attention; or raise a fuspicion of any danger from God for any cruelties they would put in practice against him. They do not act like people under doubts in this point of any fort. All true and natural reasoning, from man being his image and likeness; all that the fathers and prophets had seen and reported; with all that he himself did and faid,

faid, could not remove this veil of ignorance, nor prevent their going on with blundering rage and violence to commit the most fenseless and bar-Says Jesus unto them, if you barous murder. will not believe what I fay, look at my works: if I do not the works that no man ever did; the works of my father; fuch as divinity only can do; believe me not: but if I do what Gop my father would do, as great and good; and do it as he would do it; believe me for the work's fake. Their answer was, Works! what does it fignify what works thou doft? Thou art a man; this we know, and thou doft own; and yet fayest that God is thy father, thereby making thyself God by nature and equal with God. What therefore, if thy works were more, and greater, and better a thousand times than they are, they are not worthy a thought. A man to fay that he is God, and consequently that God is man! What works can compensate such blasphemy! Who can hear thee? Who can look at thee or thy works? Thou art not to be endured! Thou art absolutely insufferable. This was the nature of their reasoning. And thus through their ignorance of the divine nature, not knowing him to be man, they thought that nothing that he did, be what it would, was

to be attended to; and that no death could be ignominious and calamitous enough for such an enemy to God. This was their ignorance, and was the cause of their sinning as they did. Of this Jesus avails himself in their behalf, and saves them in the moment of danger.

THEN look at Jesus in the hands of his enemies. Every merciless ruffian is allowed to handle him with every species of violence. They hurt him all over: they press him: they screw him till his bones are almost disjointed: every look, every feature, every word and action is full of daggers and death. Rage upon rage, and passions and vengeance are driving and increasing each other against him. And as they grow in rage, Jesus grows more mild. My reason assures me, that as wicked men and devils did give a vent to their rage and violence, to pour itself out here with all its fulness and virulence; Jesus would pass into a state of visibility in meekness, beyond all precedents; beyond all examples; above imagination; above praise, and above himfelf. He prays, and makes their peace with his father; fnatches them from the very gates of hell; delivers them out of the hands of the living God, while they were in the height of their violence against him. O Jesus, for this heaven will

will never be filent, and the whole world will be foon thy convert! Go on now crucifiers, you are fafe enough. The father is melted down into grace and kindness: he will say nothing to any of you. Vengeance is turned, is melted into grace by the prayer of Jesus. And as to himself, he grows milder and milder. Your violence makes him meek, above and beyond what otherwise would ever have been known. Go on, I fay, for you will provoke him still to be more harmless, till his meekness shall overwhelm heaven, and burden eternity with joy and wonder! Is it necessary here to ask, is he God, or a mere frail man as we are? How am I here to measure him? Is it by myself? Am I to say, I know him to be no higher than myfelf, for I would have acted on the occasion as he did? Shall I fay I know that I am his equal in every thing? Or shall I ask an unitarian who claims an equality with him, if not more; fay, would you conduct yourself with equal grace, beauty, and glory? Will you any of you fland forth, and tell mankind I would have acted, and could have acted in every point of view, as holy and blameless as he! Hide your faces rather, and adore your infinite superior.

DR. PRIESTLEY has declared the necessity of humbling the Saviour of the world, and has promifed and vowed that he would bring down that great idol of the people, JESUS CHRIST. Here he is down for him. Look at him, thou philosopher, and fay, where wilt thou bring him down lower than he is and be alive? Say, what mockery? What derision? What depreciating language? What lessening terms? What humbling methods, and what engines of chaftifement or torment wouldst thou invent, or wish to employ against him more than is to be seen at work here? And was not all done by people that were as hearty and zealous to humble him as the Doctor can be? and by those who could as clearly fee the necessity of having him down, as he can? And was it not for the very fame reason as he assigns, to wit, his being the great idol of the people? Here then the Doctor's work and will is done; and done by as worthy and fuitable managers as himself.

But what was the consequence? Why, the more they humbled him, the higher he went in the scale of divinity. As they went on to disprove his divinity, he grew doubly divine. They, in short, by humbling him, drove him and forced him, in mildness, to be God twice over more

than otherwise he would have been, and themselves therby more wicked in proportion. Thus by their zeal to humble Jesus, and prevent idolatry, they became betrayers and murderers of the Lord of glory, and left their names for a curse and execration through centuries and generations. And though the Doctor and his modern sellow-workers cannot do all that their predecessors did, yet in nature and design their undertaking is the same, and from the same principle as that of those humblers of Jesus Christ; and, consequently, sooner or later, will have a similar conclusion.

NEXT let us consider the mocking that he endured, while on the crofs, and ee whether he appears divine, or human like one of us. The history of this is in Matthew xxvii. 39.-Mark xv. 29.-Luke xxiii. 35.- And they " that passed by railed on him and reviled him, " wagging their heads and faying, Ah! thou " that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, fave thyfelf; if thou be the Son, " come down from the cross. Also the chief " priefts, with the scribes, elders, and rulers " mocked and derided him, faying, He that " faved others, cannot fave himself! If he be " the CHRIST, the king of Israel, let him now Bb come

"come down from the cross that we may see
"and believe; and we will believe him. Let
"him save himself if he be Christ the chosen
"of God: he trusted in God, let him deliver
"him now, if he will have him; for he said,
"I am the son of God. And the soldiers
"also mocked him, coming and offering him
"vinegar, saying, If thou be the king of the
"Jews, save thyself. The thieves also who were
"crucified with him cast the same in his teeth,
"and railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ
"fave thyself and us."

HERE are four general orders of mockers named, and what they severally said. The first were those who passed to and fro, in and out of the city, and other places. They cry out with insulting triumph, Aha! is it there we see thee? Thou worker of mighty wonders; thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days! This miracle has been promised, and we have been long expecting it in vain: the temple is still as it was. Thou art behind hand then, in this sublime wonder, which was to strike us with amazement and recommend thee to our faith. But comfort, comfort, there is one door yet lest open for thee, and but one: that is, come down from that ugly cross, where thou art.

This is a miracle that calls for immediate attention: the most convenient and most necessary that can possibly be wrought in every point of view. No patients of any description of pain, impediments, or difgrace, were ever relieved by thy miracles, that flood in more need, and were in a worse situation than thyself. Here then is an opportunity of doing something for thyself. And what can be fairer? If thou art the fon of God, can any thing be a plainer proof or easier than to come down from the cross? Or if thou wilt not come, can any thing be more certain than that thou canst not, and therefore art, not he? Come fon of God, make hafte, for we are upon business, and in a hurry: come down from that painful, that curfed, and ignominious condition: come and make thy credit and power visible as the fon of God, that we may tell the people where we are going, who and what thou art, and fpread the miracle and thy divine fonship in town and country as we go. What, not move! No motion! No words! No symptom of deliverance! Nothing! O deceiver! Thy fituation is thy proper place—

THE chief priefts, scribes, and elders join and carry on the derision. They entertained and congratulated each other with mockery, in his hearing

hearing and before his face. They fay each to each, with taunt and triumph, He that faved others cannot fave himself. Here is a promising Saviour! Here is a rare object of faith! Here is an encouragement to believe! Who would not be confident in such a deliverer as this! Here is help laid upon the mighty! mighty boafter is brought to shame! Here is the man that went up and down, dealing out grace and falvation, and promifing thrones and crowns of glory as his gifts. He can fave any body and every body but himself. He can save them all from diseases, and devils, and fins, and death, and enemies, and ruin; but he can fave himself from none of these things. It is a curious thing, he can do all things, but fave himself from us, from our power, from public shame and scandal, from pain, from wounds, from torture, from the cross and death! If he is the king and CHRIST of Israel, let him put off his shame, infamy and subjection, and let him put on his royal glory, his majesty, and sovereignty, and give us a proof of his dignity: we have feen nothing of the kind as yet. Let him do for himself the most necessary thing in the world; that is, come down from the cross: by all means and above all things, come from thence.

thence. Nobody will believe him to be the chosen and beloved fon of God, while he stays there. We have fastened him to the cross: we have nailed him to the wood, and raifed him up upon it, and do thus confidently expose him to public shame, as a proof that we know that he is not the fon of Gop. He faid I am the fon of GoD; we faid that he is not, and nailed him to the cross to prove that he is not. he is, therefore, he will come down. Let him come now while we are looking, that we may fee and believe. We have nailed him there, and he could not hinder us. There he is, as fast and as fully confined as we made him. But if he is the fon of God, what is all that we have done, or can do? What is the cross? What are nails to hold the fon of Gop? And what are we before him? Let him in his might deliver himself; let him, armed with his own power, free himself and come down among us, to give some proof of his being our superior: to give any fign, any token of his power, and our weakness: any thing to convince us that he is right, and that we have done him wrong. Can he do any thing to vindicate himself and defeat or confute us? Here we are waiting: here we are challenging him to come with some proofs of

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power

power to chastise those who dare make too free with his person, or call in question his dignified name. You that are nearest to him, are there any figns of his bestirring himself? None that we know. We are all fafe enough. All his faving power feems now to be gone: friends have nothing to hope, nor foes to fear any more. You fee he cannot work miracles to-day. Not the necessary miracle to save him from the cross, the curse, the shame, the pain, and death! Not the important miracle to confute his enemies, to relieve his friends, to establish his credit, to prove his fonship, and to make converts and followers. O miserable end! O despicable figure! He is come to fave others from perdition, and is gone into it himself. The deceiver is exposed, and we are justified and proved to be right. We cannot move him, we cannot entice him, we cannot provoke him to come down from the cross: and we know and knew before that he could not, else we would not have placed him there.

THE foldiers also advance toward him and earry on the same derision, and in contempt, offering vinegar, said, If thou be the king of the Jews, the great sovereign of Israel, the redeemer of men, and Saviour of the world, save thyself

from death and shame: deliver thyself from punishment, and from those who inflict it upon thee. They offer thee what is fair and plain: do what they fay; let us all fee and know who thou art; affert thy dignity and our danger: prove thy title, and our guilt, in laying our hands upon thee. It is necessary; it is high time for thee to do fomething. But if thou wilt not, thou canst not: we are right, and thou hast thy due. The cheat is detected, and all is come upon thee according to thy deferts.

THE thieves also cast the same in his teeth, and railed, and reviled him, faying, If thou be CHRIST, fave thyself and us. What is faid to thee is most reasonable; if thou art a Saviour, fave; do thine office; prove thy ability and deliver us; but for shame begin with thyself. The Saviour of the world, come to fave finners, is at our elbow, and can fave neither them nor himself! O shameful pretender! O deceiver! Descend from the cross, as they justly demand of thee, to prove thy pretensions, and if thou canst not, thou dost put thyself down as one of us.

This and to this effect was the fense and constructive language of their derision. They all agree to harp upon his harmless and passive con-

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duct under fuch abuses. He appears as if absolutely unable to exalt himself, or humble them. If he had power, they had no doubt but that he would do it. They were in their own mind certain that he was not the fon of God, and confequently had not power to defend himself and to endanger them. They tempt and urge him therefore, with all the provocation they could invent to give them any specimen of his power to fave himself and defeat them. This was not because they wanted to see any demonstration of his ability thus to do. They only meant, that they were certain that he could not: that they were in no danger, and had nothing to fear from him. They challenge him therefore, with every species of insult to do any thing if he could. They violently dare him: they invite him, and put him to defiance, and triumph in affurance with virulent mocking, that he could not do any thing for himself or against them. In effect they did all in their power to awake his vengeance, and to procure wrath and instant damnation for themselves.

But what was the consequence? They failed. They could fasten him to the tree, and drive their nails through his hands, but could not make the mocking and derision enter to provoke vindictive

vindictive acts of power. They could not get one fymptom of what they fought, though it was done with all the power of language. No man shall have damnation on mount Calvary that Peace and falvation any man might have; but damnation is not to be had, no, not upon its being fought. Why? because Jesus cannot be made angry, and had prayed that the father would not be fo, but cover the mountain with pardon, and pave the way with love. Happy for you eloquent mockers, that there was no damnation to be had on mountain Calvary that day. Happy that Jesus could not be provoked to come down from the cross among you; and that the father could do nothing but pardon you. Jesus was too bufy on the cross in bearing your fins, and the father had been prayed unto, till he was nothing but grace and good-will that overabounded and overflowed the top of Calvary, and all that was done there.

THE enemies therefore mocked Jesus into yet more divinity than all that had passed. Benignity now became more benign; and perfect goodness mended itself, and became better: and love grew and improved, in love with its own actions. They urge him with all invention and violence to be in wrath, to punish and destroy them. Every thing

thing is done to put him out of temper and provoke him to do them some hurt, if it was in his power. But he is only provoked to be more inoffensive and harmless. Says he, they are ignorant: they do not know that I am the fon of Gop. Father, let my fonship fave them now unknown. Therefore on Calvary, as I faid, no man shall have either an angry look or word. No man shall have damnation, if he seeks it a but falvation, and pardon, and peace, and favour with God may be had freely. No man there that day shall have hell, but heaven, any, and every person may have forthwith by only opening his mouth. Hell and earth were now come to the uttermost of their provocation, and could go no further: and he was provoked to be GoD further still, in proportion to the endeavours to prove that he was not.

CALVARY then, with all its previous scenes and universal mockery, covered with derision, provoked Godhead to appear more visible and abundant in his own divinity. Look at Jesus upon Calvary, covered with rude and insulting mockers, and you will see the brightness of the glory of divinity: you will see that sulness of divinity which had been unknown, and for ever would have been unknown within himself. Here

I myself look and see infinite mildness growing milder by offence: and perfect meekness by rude insults provoked to be more meek. My fins depart at the sight: God ceases to be my terror: he becomes delightful, and engages my heart and my reason. Upon Calvary he makes me his convert and gains my adoration with all my mind and soul.

AGAIN, he pardoned there the only mocker that recanted, and he was one of the most provoking and inexcusable of them all. This was one of the thieves. This was one of two robbers, who were crucified with him, merely as a matter of difgrace; and confequently were the most abandoned and infamous characters that could be found; of this they gave a sufficient proof by joining in the mockery. It was so inexcusable in these to deride him, that when I consider them, I am ready to look on all the rest as comparatively innocent. For them to join the mockers of their companion in heavy afflictions and agony, was unnatural, inhuman, and monstrous. The recollection is enough to provoke involuntary tears. They not only joined, but by Matt. xxvii. 44. it appears, that they did it with fome peculiar emphasis of virulency and ill-will. He fays, The thieves also cast the same in his teeth. teeth. This phrase, cast the same in his teeth, plainly shows, that the derision received, from their repetition and wording, some singular degrees of malevolence and affront. This, in their situation, one would be ready to call absolutely unpardonable.

But it appears by Luke, that by turning towards him the eye of contempt and disdain, in order to give the derision an edge and direct application, one of the two catched in his face, what was ineffable and unutterable. Without pause or preface, he is an instantaneous convert. He condemns himself, reasons with his companion, justifies Jesus, acknowledges his kingdom, and begs only to be remembered by him there. Our LORD catched him, and instantly, before he could speak another word, turned toward him and faid, Verily I fay unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradife. Before the end of this day, thou shalt be with me in heaven, where the garden of GoD is; and where all the faints, in blifs and glory, after death in a difembodied flate, have their abode. Jesus bestows heaven in his own name, and at his own time and will, with all the pardon and bleffing preparatory. The man asked him alone for salvation and heaven; and he alone gave it him: promifed, granted,

granted, decreed, and pronounced the decree, and confirmed it in his own name.

Bur why was it done so hastily? Why was the business hurried over so precipitately? The world thinks it would have been more prudent to confider and ask questions, and delay. Men in general are diffatisfied for the hafte. They cannot tell why it should, nor how it could be But the reason was, that he was on Calvary. There God was mild, kind, patient, meek, gracious—there God was altogether the Saviour the man caught his face, shall I say it-when he was good-natured. But was he not always fo? Ever, ever, infinitely fo. But that day had provoked him to go beyond himself. They had provoked him to be fo mild, as to refuse damnation to petitioners. He was provoked to be all over and altogether faving and forgiving goodness! If a man fought wrath and condemnation, he was deaf and blind, and heard him not: but if a person asked for salvation, half a word would do. If a man fought heaven, he took him at his word. Jesus also received this penitent with an evident defign against every man and woman in the place. He struck at them all, and aimed at their breafts. He would fain have made a convert of the whole mountain: had they

they but recanted, he would have pardoned and comforted them with inftantaneous energy, and would have fent them all home with glad falvation in their bosoms and assured hope of heaven and eternal glory. If any one asks me, how I can know it? I answer, that I know it by almost every thing there. I know it by the falvation of the thief: I know it by the patience and mildness of Jesus: I know it by his prayer, which founded in the father's ears, and covered the mountain with pardon: and I know it, because it was the noted place and day, in which he bore our fins in his own body on the tree: fuffering therein, the just for the unjust, to bring us to GoD: and was, especially then, the meek and yielding lamb of God, bearing the fins of the whole, and could hurt none, but could fave them all. This was then neither a common day nor place. The river of life and peace, falvation and divine favour there overflowed its banks, and the whole Godhead was in motion to be kind; deaf to offences, and fwift to hear, and grant heaven to the unworthieft.

Jesus did not act in his ordinary way and stile here. He did not say as usual, Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Or die in peace, thy faith hath saved thee. This would

have

have been upon any other day the ftile and manner. But here he is all rapidity: he catches the man's words, and as it were eats them up: he cannot flay to mention his faith, or repentance, or pardon, or peace; but with vehement hafte, places him in heaven: not in heaven only, but there in paradife: not only in paradife, but in paradife with me: in paradife with me this day: I fay it: I fay it unto thee: I verily upon oath fay it. This is what we have not met with before. It is more fudden and rapid than any thing of the kind, and peculiar to Calvary and that day, wherein damnation was denied, and the gates of heaven thrown wide. Then and there. the divine clemency came forth from within itself and showed its features, and made its voice to be heard, to give an increase to adoration, and make the world a convert and a believer. True, in that day, there was but little done; but the conversion of the thief, and his introduction into the kingdom of God, is a proof of what he would have done to the whole, and a specimen of what is yet to come. For Calvary and the cross will come to be seen; and when seen and viewed, falvation and heaven will drop down, and men shall be faved, and placed in paradise with fpeed and ease. Nothing hinders it now, but what what did so then. Men will not, and nothing else stands in the way; witness the thief on the cross. He will be evidence on the side of Jesus, with what ease and dispatch he would have saved all on mountain Calvary that day, and the whole world from that day to this. For common sense cannot suggest any thing to create a partiality in favour of the thief: if any thing it would be the contrary.

CALVINISM afferts that this man was an elect, chosen rather because he was worse than other finners, that the freeness and sovereignty of grace might be displayed in him. Bishop Hoadley and other latitudinarians fay no, that the thief was a virtuous man, of an excellent character and exemplary deportment; and only fell into the fin, which brought him to this unhappy end, as an accidental flip; and that his conversion was no more than a natural return into his amiable conduct and virtuous habits. Which of these is the most unnatural and remote from truth, is hard to fay. An amiable character, with only an accidental flaw, would not fuit the Jewish purpose on the occasion. In character he must be wholly uncreditable, and in manners flagitious to anfwer their end. The man was and must be a notorious and scandalous sinner, because it is said that

that Jesus was hereby numbered with transgressors. Numbered to die with the worst of criminals, as himself one of the chief.

But the man was not faved, either because he was a greater sinner, or less than other men, but because he asked for it. And he was so signally and triumphantly saved, because he sought it on Calvary. The less sin men commit the better, but no man is saved either because he has sinned more or less than another, but because he believes and repents; and he is more or less eminent in proportion to his fervor and sincerity as a penitent.

AFTER the above, Jesus cried aloud, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? This place proves that the father and son are two distinct persons, though united and resident in each other. They communicate, impart, and co-operate in a manner above our ideas. They consequently can forbear and with-hold. That, the father here had done, and caused this loud and vehement cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? The place, the day, the occasion, the witnesses, the loudness of the pronunciation, in the hearing of all, and the emotions of Jesus, all concur to affert importance to man and vastness of sense and ideas.

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FIRST the words affert that God is the God of IESUS. The father is God of the fon: and as he is the only begotten fon, the father is his Gop only. He is his Gop by nature, and therefore the relation in which he stands to him, and the right and propriety which he has in him, is natural, effential, and necessary. Men are clay, and clay cannot be related to the divine nature strictly, and fay thou art mine. Nay we and all creatures are strictly nothing; and nothing cannot be related to absolute being, and say I am a kin to thee, and thou art mine. We are all infinitely far from God, and our nature and his cannot therefore meet in a necessary state of connection. But nature in IESUS gave him a right in God, as his own God. And he alone had a strict and real right to fay, My GoD. He is the God of others as a matter of promife and courtefy, which he may recall. But JESUS could fay, My God by nature, and therefore in truth, by necessity, and in the absolute.

AGAIN, he is his God by practice. He did all the works of God in all their perfection and fublimity. He could do fo, and did every work, as perfect as the father would do; as much to his mind, and as exactly to his will as he could do himself:

himself: altogether as mighty, as wife, and as good. But men and angels, heaven and earth are incapable of doing any thing worth Gop's looking at: equally fo. He may justly turn away from their works and forfake them as neither wife nor good, nor able to do one thing fit to appear before him. The heavens, even the heaven of heavens, are unclean before him, and the angels are charged with folly and incapacity: and the innocent, who never finned, fland in equal need of a Saviour with the guilty. None of them therefore can fay, Why hast thou forfaken me? Their language then is, all that know him and themselves, Why shouldst thou not forfake me? Who am I? What am I, and what can I do, but what may justly cause thee to turn away and forfake me? O how canft' thou bear me, or any thing that I do, or fay! But with Jesus the case was the reverse. All that he did and faid, was altogether perfect, and to the mind of God in every point of view. Confummate goodness, wisdom, and beauty were visible in all his works and ways. He knew that it was to the mind and will of the father altogether. Why then, hast thou forsaken me? What have I done to offend? What have I not done to please? Have I failed in filial obedience? Cc2

dience? Have I forfeited divine love and approbation? Is there ought neglected, or done amis? Nothing, nothing. Men have finned and departed from me, and I frown upon their works and ways. But here am I in their flead: I have done what they neglected: I have fupplied that wherein they are behind: have fatisfied for all: have supplied their lack of service: have reflored what was kept back: have acted for them. Is there any thing more charged? any fin unatoned? any debt unpaid? any duty unfulfilled? any damage un-repaired? Any thing more required of me as their friend? Nothing. Why then hast thou forsaken me or them? Return to me and every man. Be angry with none; be pleafed with all. Thy will is done; thy glory is fecured, and their righteousness is perfected. Thus Jesus pleaded and re-united Gop and man.

THE father is therefore the God of Jesus twice over. And consequently he cries, My God, my God, twice over: my God by nature, my God by practice. And as men had all by sin departed from him, so here he gave a specimen of his natural proneness to forsake them as a God of holiness. But Jesus expostulates, and proves that there was no need, by presenting

prefenting himself in their place, and shows that the consequence of forsaking them, would be forfaking the fon alfo, who is their furety. He bore our fins in his own body on the tree, fuffering, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to Gop. And what he did fuffer by the withdrawing of the father, is above our conceptions. But be what it will, he bore it, and reconciled us to God thereby. He held him fast, and would not let him go; and also pleaded and proved that there was no need of forfaking, for here was every thing fet to rights: When he wrestled with Jacob, he would have withdrawn and forfaken him, but was vet expostulated with, detained, and overcome. here more eminently fo. Jesus pleaded that there was no cause of departure, or frowns, or referve.

DAVID therefore used this plea prophetically and by way of anticipation, with all the antients who believed in Jesus, as he who would come and plead for them: and believers since are to use the words as what have been urged in their behalf.

Hence all the affurance of falvation is to be inferred: peace with God; reconciliation; nearnefs, and access to him in prayer with confidence. For every one may take the words out of the Cc3 mouth

mouth of Jesus and repeat the whole after him: may plead, Why dost thou forsake me? What necessity of thy departing, or of my condemnation, since Jesus is thy son and my Saviour. All my sins are satisfied for: all righteousness is fulfilled for me. He is my wisdom and righteousness and every thing else for me. What good is there that he has not done? And what has he done, but for me? This is thy glory, and this is my salvation. Thus Jesus claimed God as his God, by a right sounded in nature and necessity, and showed that there was now no cause of desertion, and said it in the name and behalf of every man.

But it was not the son, strictly speaking, that the father was forsaking, but sinners, now considered as included in him, and held to the view of the father, who though infinitely willing and gracious to save, yet must be, and prove himself to be, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity without some awful signs of hatred and indignation. It was sinners in sact that he was turning away from. But the son calls them himself. I am one with them: do not come by them to me, but take them in thy way: if I am thy son, let them be individually so, in the same relation: if I am beloved, include them in the same, and let

the love wherewith thou lovest me be in them. If I am worthy not to be forsaken, count them so: if I am blameless, count them the same. Let me and them make but one person before thee; and let that one person be thy beloved and only begotten son: reckon us but one: I am the whole: reckon no more. And let this be thy gospel to them, and let nothing exclude any one, but his persisting to exclude himself. Our Jesus thus claimed God as his right, and held him as his, and ours, and put a plea against being forsaken, which will not fail to succeed; and proclaimed it aloud on the top of Calvary in the hearing of innumerable witnesses.

He did not say this as a subject of his own, of a private nature. All his actions were the actions of those whom he represented: those done upon Calvary were such above all others. That is, were of a more solemn, interesting, and extensive nature than those done before. Here, he has withe a loud voice, secured for us a right in God, and made him our God that we might approach and claim it with affured boldness, with humility and godly fear. He exercised this faith for us, and the faith of Jesus therefore, is the faith of all, and giveth glory to God, and peace and salvation to the soul. He that denies this faith,

denies his right in God, and consequently, is denied by him, who must necessarily perish without a God, as well as without pity.

THE next action done upon the cross is mentioned, John xix. 25, 26, 27. "Now there "flood by the cross his mother—When Jesus "therefore saw his mother, and the disciple "standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto "unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son. "Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mo- ther. And from that hour that disciple took "her unto his own."

Bur in what fense are we to take this action? All that I ever read or heard on the fubject, represent it as an instance of his benignity to provide a friend to take care of his mother, after his decease. If this was the object, I must confess that it appears to be one of the most unaccountable transactions in the new testament. But I believe that this was fo far from being in view, that it made no part of it. For if it had been a private family affair, it would have been fettled in private, as fuch matters ought to be. Especially it would not have been reserved for that day, and made one of the public transactions of Calvary. And befide, Mary had four fons alive, and each of them as capable of taking

taking care of her as John, if not more fo.

But the transaction is wholly of a public nature, and extensive in its influences. Mary soon after became the public idol of the world, and seemingly caused more sin and shame than any idol that mankind ever set up. This came about, not through any fault of her's, but by the craft of the devil, and delusions of soolish and wicked men.

A GREAT part of the attention and religion of the fecond, third, fourth, and fifth centuries, was to confider what she was to be called, whether a woman, a virgin, or the mother of GoD. And they disputed and preached, cursed and bleffed each other about this, as a matter of eternal weight and moment. And when popery came on, Mary, as a virgin in heaven, and the pope, as a batchelor on earth, managed all the business of falvation in both worlds, and Gop had comparatively little to do. Mary had the prayers and praifes, and vows, and facrifices, and gifts of all forts of people. She was treated as the mother of God and queen of heaven; and to have her pleased, and to get her good will and interest was reckoned every thing. Save us, O Mary, was thought the highest act of devotion, and the most

ven. She was set up thus in a state of rivalship with God, and was made the boldest competitor he ever had among men. No other idol
ever received so much of his praise; or had it
so heartily and devoutly rendered. She was indeed strictly set above him, and above all that
is called God. She was therefore the greatest
goddess that the world ever adored, and without
her fault, the greatest enemy to the divine nature: And it is in her, and under her, that
idolatry reached its end, and came to all its sulness. God was never so dishonoured, and man
was never so besotted, bewitched, and enslaved
before.

Now, it was not as a good or bad woman, that she was thus idolized; but as the mother of Christ, the son of God. Being thus honoured, the angel said, and she said herself, that all generations should call her blessed: and, just they should. This the devil would improve for the purposes above: possibly had begun a little, and now seeing matters likely to go against him with regard to the divinity in dispute, he might be turning the subject in his mind, and consider how to conduct the scheme.

HEREUPON, JESUS dissolves the relation between him and Mary, and ordains it and establishes it now henceforth to exist between Mary and John. In civil governments, the king, for wife ends, takes a common man, and creates him a nobleman by his word; and thenceforth that man is as really a nobleman, as if he was born fuch. So Jesus by his word created Mary and John, mother and fon to each other. His word had given existence to heaven and earth. And now in the fame manner, it gives existence to the relation and confanguinity that he decreed and pronounced, and made them, as really mother and fon to each other, as if John had been literally born of Mary. And as to himself, he does not call her his mother, but woman; and consequently, she was no longer to him a mother, but woman only in common with others. From that hour John took her to his own, and from that moment Mary had nothing to do with the church or the world, or any individual in either; nor either of them with her, but as she was the mother of John: for the relation between her and Jesus is disfolved and annihilated.

Considering the subject in this light, how great and gracious a step! How divine, and worthy

worthy to be transacted and recorded among the folemn and awful acts of Calvary, and be made one of the very finishing actions of his life! And it delivered and saved the true church; and has rendered the false inexcusable. They have been worshipping and adoring the mother of John; and continue to do so to this day.

But now the idolatrous worship and extravagant honouring of Mary, by the popish devotees,
is turning apace into abuse and infamy. The
papists thought it impossible to make her good
enough and set her sufficiently high before; and
now begin to think that she cannot be made
vile enough, nor sufficiently degraded and exposed. And it is the very same devil that presides
over them, and dictates in both. He is no friend
of Mary at any time, no more than of her God
and Saviour.

ARE we then to flight and dishonour Mary? No; by no means. The above appointment was not intended to injure her, or lessen the honour and affection due to her name. I say that she has no authority or influence in the church in heaven or earth: that she is a follower and servant of Jesus Christ, a fellow creature, a fellow servant. When placed here, I call her the happy, the honoured, the highly sayoured Mary:

yea, and in honour and affection, call her the mother of Gop.

I am obliged for brevity fake to flip over some things, and come to speak of his death. This took place about three o'clock afternoon, after being on the cross fix hours. That his dying was not owing to crucifixion is evident by the time; by his strong and powerful voice, just before he expired; as well as by the conduct of Pilate and some of those who attended upon the occasion. Pilate could not believe it, and marvelled when it was proved, and those who saw him were amazed. He died not by the violence offered to his person by men, either by the crucifixion, or any thing previous to it. The Jews were guilty of the murder in every point of view; and yet it is true that he died not by any thing done by them.

THE atonement for fin must be by death, and that death must be free from sin. The atoner, therefore, must be able to die without being killed by others, or killing himself. If it was necessary that Jesus should be killed by others, or kill himself, murder was necessary, and sin could be taken away by nothing but by sin; and the greatest sin was necessary to take away the smaller. Indeed, in that case, the Jews could not be said to have acted viciously

vicionsly, but virtuously, obediently, and excellently; and the world would have just reason to praise them and their worthy deed. But the death of Jesus was from himself, by a mysterious ability, in, and of himself and peculiar to himself alone. With him all things are possible and nothing is impossible. God manifest in sless and dying therein, are things so far above us, that we are capable of nothing further than proofs and certainty that it is so, but how we cannot comprehend.

Jesus states this subject thus, John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my father love me, because I " lay down my life that I may take it again. "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I " have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father." The father commanded the fon to lay down his life for men, and loved him for doing fo. But if in order thereunto, it had been necessary for others to kill him, or for him to kill himfelf, the father could neither command it nor love it; for it would have been a finful action. The death of Jesus is no act of violence; but an awful yielding, a passive, filial subjection, and obedience to the commanding word of the father to die. When the dying moment, and the command

mand arrived, he bowed his head, and dismissed his spirit, as the word is. He bowed his head, dismissed his soul, and so laid down his life as an act of obedience to the command so to do, without any bloody actions or exertions from within, or from without, by that power by which all things are possible with him, and with him alone.

Thus the atonement is the work of God, the perfect and willing obedience of the son to the will and word of the father. The father in holiness commanded the son to die which he knew he was able and willing to do: the son obeys and lays down his life, full as free and willing as the father commands: are therefore both equally holy and equally glorious in the work.

What the Jews and Gentiles did in the bufiness, they did as foolish and wicked murderers
and intruders: it was foreseen and foretold that
they would act so, and unperswadably persist in
it, and God therefore had fore-ordained that they
should act so. But what they did was not his
death, and made no part of the atonement.
Their actions were those of malicious murderers:
but they neither added to, nor diminished from;
neither hindered nor forwarded the atonement
which was the work of God, being the persect
command

command of the father, and the equal obedience of the fon: and is the holiest of all the works of infinite holiness.

AND for this reason, just as Jesus was going to bow his head, in obedience to this command, he faid. It is finished. So much was never meant by one word as here. The original is in one word. FINISHED. It was now emphatically meant and faid. The way I would wish it is, ENDED. Things had been, but are ended. and now no more; things that were in their beginnings, or imperfect state, are now ended. Sin was, but is now ended: the wrath of God for fin, is ended: the curse of the moral, and the yoke of the ceremonial law, are ended: the prophecies and promifes of the coming of the feed of the woman, are ended in their full accomplishment: the work of bruifing the head of the ferpent, and destroying him who had the power of death, is ended: the power of death, the world, and the flesh to destroy and enslave men, is over and ended: holy obedience, to the glory of Gop and joy of men and angels, is perfected and ended: the offence of the first mediafor and all the abundance of it, is ended and fwallowed up in the glory, grace, and perfection of the fecond: the work of reconciling the world

Gop, not imputing their trespasses, is ended: the toil, and grief, and forrows of the fon, are ended: all the covenants, purposes, decrees, and councils of eternity, are ended in their full accomplishment: the separation and distinction of Jews and Gentiles, is ended: a fafe, a new, a certain, and univerfal way to heaven and eternal glory, that all men might enter there, is finished and ended. And what shall I say more-The revelation of Godhead, of power, of love, of meekness, of wisdom and grace; the revelation of all the glorious divinity in the divine nature, is ended. The fon made himself visible to men, and the father became visible in the son, in every situation in life: the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, therefore, is visible in the face of JESUS CHRIST. If this therefore will not make converts; if this will not make them believe, repent, love God and adore; they must perish: nothing more shall be attempted to engage them: the work is finished and ended.

WHILE JESUS was in the act of dying obedience, great commotions and impressions were observed in surrounding nature. The sun, the earth, the temple, the rocks, and the graves, as it were lost possession of their usual state. What ailed them? Did he say any thing to them?

Not a word by ought that appears. Yet they make fignals of diffress to each other: they betray figns of great fear and awe. The heavens by their lustre declare his glory; but Jesus now being without his glory, they hide themselves and put on obscurity and darkness: the earth having received her foundation and stability from him, now shakes and trembles in fome fort of fympathy and fellowship with her dying Gon: the rocks fignify that they are now weak, with him who gave them their strength and firmness, and therefore yield to fall asunder of themselves: the veil of the temple rent from the top to the bottom, to profane and expose the holy of holies, because Jesus was so profanely exposed: and the graves opened and fignified that they would be bound foon to deliver up their prisoners.

But this is not all, nor the main thing intended by these things. Their language, and the instruction they convey is, the voluntary sufferings, and death of Christ. The sun went dark of itself; the earth shook, the rocks and veil rent, and the graves opened; not by any force or acts of external violence; but they did it of themselves; uncompelled and free. This was to signify and affert, that Jesus did not die

by compulsion, or any acts or exertions of violence; but died spontaneously; yielding, and laying down his life of himself. And that all the rage and violence which they had exerted, could no more do it, than it could absorb the sun and shake the earth.

Now if Jesus was a mere man, dying as any other, these things would be not only unaccountable, but injurious; for it would be too much.

Thus I have argued for the divinity of CHRIST, as apparent in his actions, discourses, and fufferings from his first public passover to his last, in which he died on the cross: a space of time feemingly of three years and a half. I have not always purfued my way in the argumentative stile, but indulged myself often in admiration, extafy, joy, and rhapfody, which the glory of the subject calls for. I have also now and then left off formal reasoning, and contented myself with stating and merely afferting; not for want of arguments, but because they appeared needless, and too formal. I believe that I have fully and fairly carried my argument, and established the point in view, against the arian and unitarian theology, that Jesus of Nazareth is not - a mere man as we are.

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But there is a fect, and has been in every age from the apostles to this, who ascribe divinity to Jesus, and set him above all created beings. But it is done in such a manner that it amounts to nothing more than unitarianism. They say, that the son of the divine nature, God by nature, is within the man Jesus, united and become one with him. This is clogged with many intricate absurdities, but ends with unitarianism, in making Jesus a mere man, helped of God to do what he did. Against this I said a great deal elsewhere, of which I shall repeat two or three things here.

FIRST, all the divine works, that we have recorded in the evangelists, were said and done by the man Jesus; but never said that the son of God was within him. He said that the father was within him, and spake and acted; but never said that the son was within him. He said, the said, the son worketh hitherto, and I work; but never said, the son worketh hitherto, and I work. Jesus the man said, I and the sather are one, but never, I and the son are one. The Jews did not condemn him for saying, that the son of God was within him, but for saying, that the sman himself was the son of God, which they said could not be true, because he was a man.

Tesus never faid, to inform friends or foes, these great works that I do, you are not to ascribe to me the man, but to the son of Gop within me, and united unto me. He joined the father with himself in all the works and the glory of them, but never the fon. Now if the man Jesus, unequivocally and indefinitely called himself the son of God, and classed himself with the father in power, works, and co-operations; and never ascribed works, or co-operation, or praise to the son of Gop within him: I am certain that he meant that I should take the man alone for the only begotten fon, and ascribe no more to the internal son within, than he did himself. He never says that he was, or did any thing, and neither do I. The man ascribes all the works and sonship and glory with the father to himself, and so do I.

SECONDLY, the apostle asserts and establishes positively and emphatically, in form, the sonship and eternity of the man. I. John i. I. 2. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eter-

"manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have sellowship with us: and truly our sellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ." The affertion is, that Jesus Christ the son of God, is not of late, but is the eternal life, which was from the beginning with the father: even that which was heard, seen, viewed with bodily eyes, and handled with bodily hands, and was apparent to all the human senses; was the son of God, and the eternal life. This is emphatical and critical without a parallel.

THIRDLY, Eph. iv. 8, 9, 10, affirms, that Christ first descended to the lower earth, and ascended into heaven; and that he who descended is the same also that ascended. The doctrine is equally positive and forcible against every one of the above heresies. If Jesus Christ descended first from heaven to earth, if indeed he descended at all; and if he that descended first, is the same as he who ascended afterwards; the athanasian, arian, and unitarian doctrines are false; equally so. Either this text, or those doctrines, must be absolutely given up and renounced. But this text, and that cited before it, is in per-

which I have delivered above; and here I conclude the first part of our subject. The second part was to be a view of the work of Christ, thereby to prove that he made a full, a positive, and formal atonement for the sins of all mankind; and consequently, that all men are equally bound to believe and be saved, and inexcusable if they perish. But I have dwelt so long upon the first, that I must drop the second part and end here. This is Jesus, the true God, and the eternal life, and all the rest are idols.

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